1506/290

A GUIDE TO Eternity:

Extracted out of the

WRITINGS OF THE Holy Fathers, AND Ancient Philosophers.

Written Originally in *Latine*,

By *JOHN BONA*:

And now done into *English*,

By *Roger L'Estrange* Esq;

The Second Edition.

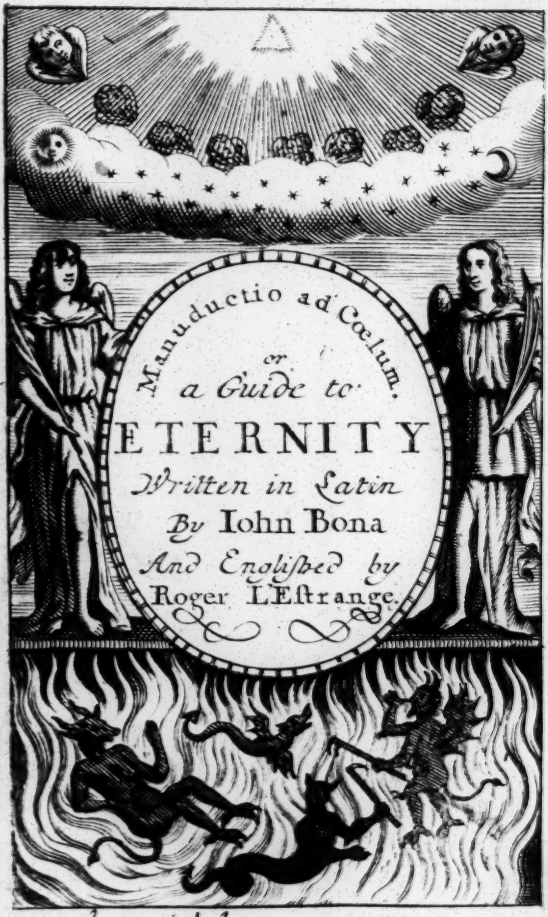
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THE
Author to the Reader.

IT is the end of this Preface, to encounter two Objections, which I expect ſhall be charged upon me: Firſt, Why does he not practiſe what he recommends, and quit the World himſelf, before he take upon him to teach others the way to Heaven? Secondly, What news does he tell us? Truly, no more than what we have a thouſand times over, and better in other Authors: And this with a ſtrange kind of Temerity and Confidence, he is willing to impoſe upon us for his own.

My Anſwer is (in the words of a wiſe man: (*Horace.*)

— *Fungor vice Cotis, acutum*
Reddere quæ Ferrum valet, exors ipſa ſecandi.

My Buſ'neſs is to whet, not cut.
Or if I may take up the words of another

other great man: *I look upon the whole World, but as one large Hospital; and upon my self, not as a Doctor, but one of the Patients. If I can contribute any thing to a Publick Good, it's well. But however, while I write this, I am but talking to my self, and I make my Reader my Confident.* I do not pretend to be a Teaching Master, but a Teaching Scholar. I am desirous to learn of others, even when I instruct my self; for he that teaches, learns.

As to the second Objection, I shall prevent it by a most ingenuous Confession of the naked Truth. There is very little of this Discourse, that I can honestly call my own. The greatest part of it is what I have gathered out of the Holy Fathers, and Antient Philosophers: And somewhat I have added out of my own Experience, which I have wrought together into one Confection; a good deal of it in the very words of the Author; and the rest in my own stile, plain and accommodate to all capacities; for my business is not Rhetorick, but Good Life. And in order to that blessed End, I have here drawn up a Compendium of Moral Institutions and Counsels (the best I could) out

out of the Writings of the Fathers, *Seneca*, *Epictetus*, *Antoninus*, and others of the Ancients, both Christian and Pagan. What I have found effectual in my own case, I have here communicated for the benefit of others; without so much as saying where I had it, without clogging my Paper with Citations, or playing the Wit or the Orator. My Design is to work upon the Passions, not the Phansie; and if the Physick be proper, no matter for the plainness of it, or who mingled the Potion. I might have enlarged, and I might have expressed my self much better. But a few Precepts that are ready and at hand, are much more profitable to us, than whole Volumes that overcharge the Memory, and leave us at a loss where to find them, when we have occasion to use them. He that knows what belongs to his Salvation, has learn'd what is sufficient. I wish with all my Soul, that this poor Essa: (such as it is) may conduce to a Publick Good; but however, that it may not rise in Judgment against the Author, for not conforming in his Life to his Precepts.

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GUIDE TO ETERNITY.

CHAP. I.

Of Mans last End. The Danger of neglecting or mistaking it. The Means and Method of attaining it.

I. THe thing I have propounded in this Discourse, is to bring the Reader to Heaven, that is to say, unto that perfect state of Bliss, to which we are all directed by a Natural Impulse, as the principal End of our Being; and wherein there remains nothing further to be desired. As to the matter of *Happiness*;

pineſs; it is the common wiſh and buſineſs of Mankind: But ſuch is the blindneſs of our depraved Condition, that inſtead of the True and Sovereign Good, we apply our ſelves to vain Appearances and Counterfeits. Some will have it to be in Wanting of Nothing, and conſequently in Riches: Others place it in Dominion and Power: Some again, in Voluptuouſneſs and Pleaſure (a mean and moſt ignoble Miſtake. Thus we labour and toil to no purpoſe, and (like men in a wrong way) the more haſte we make, the further from our Journeys end; hardly in any thing more unhappy, than in not being ſenſible of our unhappineſs.

II. And this, in truth, is our great Misfortune, that we purſue we know not what. Every man would fain live and die happy: But what true Happineſs is, or how to compaſs it, there is not one of a thouſand that underſtands. So that in all our Actions, Wiſhes and Endeavours we croſs our ſelves, without any regard to that Immenſe Good, which ought to be the only and ultimate Object of our Conſideration. The life we lead, is like that

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that of the Piſmire, a perpetual and fruitleſs Ramble and Agitation; one while up, another while down, and ſtill empty. The great Creator of all things made Man out of nothing, and he that gave us all, expects all, and to be beloved and ſerved without a Rival, as the Author of our Being: And it is all but time loſt, that we employ any other way. And yet, Alas? How ſmall a part of our Thoughts and Actions do we beſtow upon that God unto whom the whole ought to be directed. A Chriſtian ſhould do in his life, as a Traveller does upon the way: He propounds to go to ſuch a place, to take up his reſt when he comes there, and ſo makes every ſtep he ſets an advance towards it. The only *Reſting Place* we can promiſe to our ſelves is Heaven, and we are to bend all our motions and ſtudies that way. Whatſoever withdraws us from it, miſleads us to our eternal Deſtruction.

III. We ought to behave our ſelves in this life, as in a Sea-voyage, when the Ship ſtops for freſh Water, a man goes aſhore, and entertains himſelf with ſhells and trifles by the by, but his mind is ſtill

at Sea, and ſo ſoon as ever the Maſter calls, away he goes, leaves all, and returns to the Veſſel. So in the uſe and enjoyment of external things, (which are but as ſhells and trifles) we are ſtill to hearken after the call of our Maſter, and never to be ſo intent upon this world, as to forget the buſineſs of the next. Outward things ſerve us, to the end that we may ſerve God; without which we fall from the Divine Unity, and by giving up our ſelves to many unneceſſary things, we ſet up as many Idols, as there are Creatures which we love with an inordinate Affection, unto which, by a foul Sacriledg we offer up (not an Ox or a Goat, but) our ſelves and our Salvation. God will have no ſharers, and it is againſt the Law of Love, to love any thing with him, but in him, and for him. It is no leſs than Damnation, to leave the Creator, and adhere to the Creature.

IV. We may ſay of Minds, as the Prince of Phyſicians ſays of impure Bodies: *The more meat you give them, the more hart you do them.* For in paſſing from an ill habit to a better, the Poiſon of a wicked life muſt be firſt vomited up, to prepare the Mind

Mind for receiving the more effectual Aliments of Vertue, which Purgation is to be wrought after this manner: There must be a kind of Expiation for sins committed; all Affections toward them withdrawn, all evil Customs rooted out, all vicious Inclinations and unruly Appetites are to be subjected to the Government of Reason: The Flesh is to be kept under; the Necessities of Nature are to be provided for with Moderation; the Tongue and the Senses are to be bridled; and whatsoever may give a check or Interruption to the speedy gaining of Vertue, is to be utterly exterminated. And why should not all this be done? Where's the difficulty we fancy? what are we afraid of? A thing that we have in our own power: (He assisting us indeed, who is all in all, and our beginning and end.) But we must first go out from our selves, before we can come at him, and the further we remove from the one, the nearer will our approach be to the other.

V. In the first place, we are to resolve within our selves, whither we are to go, and what it is we would have. The next Point will be, to learn out the way; and

then to take notice from time to time how we proceed, and what progreſs we make in our paſſage. In order to this, we are impartially to examine our Conſciences, and obſerve the difference betwixt what we are, and what we ought to be. It will be too late to conſider, when we are in the Snare. We are to ſtudy how to Tame our raging Luſts; how to curb our tormenting Fears: We are to enure our ſelves to the contempt of earthly things, by leaving them, before they leave us, and to part willingly with what we cannot long poſſeſs, to the end, that when our laſt hour comes, there may be the leſs matter even for Death it ſelf to work upon. But whatever elſe we do, let us be ſure to look to the main; and ſee that the Soul, which is firſt in Excellence, be not laſt in our Care and eſteem. *What will it profit a man to gain the whole World, and loſe his own Soul?* There can be no gain, where there is loſs of Salvation.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

He that would live well, let him chuſe a good Tutor. The Qualities of ſuch a Tutor, and the Duties of the Pupil.

I. AS the Service of God is the chief End of the very Being of Man; ſo is there not any thing more neceſſary for him that would make his Duty his Buſineſs, than to apply himſelf to the Counſel and Government of a Prudent Maſter. Does any man venture to travel in an unknown way without a Guide? Or ſo much as to take up a difficult Trade without an Inſtructer? There may be indeed ſome General Rules ſet down in writing for the benefit of the Abſent, or of Poſterity; but in the Particulars of When and How, there is no adviſing at a diſtance; nor without taking in all the Circumſtances, and deliberating with the things themſelves. It is in the Diſeaſes of the Mind, as in thoſe of the Body: A Phyſician can never preſcribe ſo properly to his Patient, What Diet, what Phyſick, by Letter, as by word of mouth,

upon feeling of the Pulſe, and enquiring into the ſtate and accidents of his Diſtemper. And this holds as well in the Maladies of the Soul. Some there are, which are not to be redreſſed, nor in truth diſcovered, but upon a Perſonal Conference and Obſervation. St. *Paul* himſelf (the deſigned Doctor of the Gentiles) was ſent to *Ananias*, after his Converſion, that he might learn from him the way of Life. He that undertakes upon his own ſingle ſtrength, to overcome the Perverſneſs of corrupt Nature, to wraſtle with ſpiritual Impieties, and to break through all Obſtacles and Impediments, to make his way to Vertue, will find it a hard and a laborious Task. It will concern us therefore, to call in ſome charitable Aſſiſtant to our Aid, that may lay open to us the Dangers we are to encounter, the Frauds and Stratagems of the Enemy, and teach us how to win the Field in the Day of Battel. If you ask, What kind of Man muſt this be? Let him be a Perſon of Wiſdom and Fidelity; One that has both a Will and a Power to do us good: One for whom we have a Reverence without Dread: One that ſeeks rather our Amendment than our Puniſhment,

ment, and that lives better than he ſpeaks. He that preaches one thing, and does another, is not worthy of this Truſt.

II. He muſt be no Flatterer neither; no Cajoler of the People, on the one hand, nor a Frequenter of Great Mens Tables, or the Courts of Princes on the other. I would have him as well skill'd in Manners, as the Goldſmith is in Moneys; ſhew him any Coyn, any Affection, he ſhall tell you what it is; or like an experienced Phyſician, preſently make a Judgment of the Diſeaſe, and preſcribe you the Remedy. Such a one he muſt be, as is able to dive into the Secrets and Receſſes of the Inward Man, and to ſuit himſelf to the Humors and Diſpoſitions of thoſe he has to do withal, in order to their ſpiritual Advantage. One that is not tranſported by his Paſſions, but teaches and invites Offenders in the Spirit of Meekneſs: One that has learn'd how to detect, and diſappoint all the Artifices and Crafts of the Devil: One to whom a man may ſecurely commit the moſt recondite Privacies of his Soul, and Confeſs himſelf without a bluſh: One in fine, that can diſtinguiſh betwixt

good and evil. And *happy is he that finds such a Treasure.*

III. With such a Friend we are to communicate in all Conditions, and upon all Occasions, without any Scruple or Reserve, and to take his Opinion along with us, in all cases, whether good or evil. Now we are to conjure him to tell us freely of our faults, wherein we do amiss, without any sort of Difficulty. And when he spares us, as if we had none, we are not presently to take for granted, that we are innocent: But rather to impute his silence, either to his lothness to disoblige us, or to his despair of reforming us. And we are then to press him with more earnestness, and to shew him by our actions, the desire we have to profit by his Reproofs, and to square our Lives for the future, according to his Direction. It will be a good sign, if we love him the better for his Reprehensions, and take delight in them: When we are come to that pass once, we shall still part with him, either better than he found us, or in a fair way to it. *In the Distempers of the Mind, it goes far, if one has but a good will to be cur'd.*

IV. These

IV. Theſe are the mutual Offices of the Maſter, and of the Scholar; that the one be well diſpos'd to confer a benefit, and the other to receive it: And truly the former can hardly fail, without the extreme Obſtinacy, Impatience, or Incapacity of the latter. There are ſome people ſo over-conceited of their own Abilities, that they will never endure to be advis'd by any body elſe. *All this* (they cry) *is no more than what I could have told you: To what purpoſe do you trouble me with what I knew before?* But I ſay on the other ſide, that *it is to very great purpoſe.* There are many things we know, which we do not at all times ſo well heed and conſider; and in ſuch caſes, the Admonition is not ſo much intended to inform the Underſtanding, as to quicken the Memory; and rather to do the Office of a Remembrancer, than of a Tutor. In other caſes, there is nothing ſo evident, but men will pretend Ignorance: So that the Suggeſtion of Matters (even the moſt manifeſt) muſt not be omitted, for Vertue does then more vigorouſly exert herſelf, when ſhe is touch'd and provok'd. Some people there are that have not the Face

to

to acknowledg an Error; (a moſt ridiculous and unmanly ſort of Modeſty!) Others have not the Heart to do it, but fret inwardly, and ſmother all in a ſtomachful ſilence, falling foul, like Bedlams, upon the Phyſician that would cure them. This miſchievous Secreſie and Reſerve, proceeds undoubtedly from the Temptation of the Devil, who needs never deſpair of gaining his end, ſo long as he can keep himſelf cloſe and undiſcover'd. Our Ulcerated Bodies, let them be never ſo offenſive and lothſome, we can expoſe to the Chirurgeon or Phyſician, in hope of Remedy, even without a bluſh: But what a ſtir we make, to hide the blemiſhes and infirmities of our Souls, as if to conceal them, were really to take them away; when yet we are not able to hinder them, even from betraying themſelves. He that will not own himſelf to be wounded, ſhall never be cur'd.

V. Let a Phyſician tell us: *You have ſuch or ſuch a Diſeaſe, you are dangerouſly ill. Have a Care, you neither eat nor drink any thing to day, but this or that:* So far are we from taking this Liberty amiſs, that on the contrary, we reckon it for a favour,

favour, and give him thanks and money for his pains. But let any man tell us, that we are ſick of Burning Luſts, Vain Opinions, Inordinate Affections, it puts us into a Rage, as if it were an Affront to be reveng'd with Fire and Sword. Never ſuch a Diſhonour! To tell me that I am Proud, Luſtful, Covetous, *&c.* An Indignity not to be born by Fleſh and Blood! And where lies the Injury now? Wretched Creatures that we are! Why may we not as well quarrel with a Glaſs, that ſhews us an Ill Face, as with a Friend that ſhews us a Vicious Mind? It ſhould be our Buſineſs to correct what is amiſs, to amend our Lives, and cleanſe our Hearts from all Corruption; and ſo to live, that the World ſhall not condemn us.

Stephen Warne
his Book
1730

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Of Purgation from Sin. The very Diſpoſition to Sin, as well as the Sin it ſelf is to be rooted out. No Remedy more effectual againſt it, than the Conſideration of Death and Eternity.

I. SIN is the cauſe of all Evils, and he that commits it, is out of his way to his laſt End. It is the Seed of all our Miſeries, and the Poiſon of Humane Nature. The Malignity of it is better underſtood after the doing of it, than in the Act it ſelf. The Binding of the Living together with the Dead, to deſtroy the one with the Stench of the other, is not much unlike the Puniſhment which Divine Juſtice has allotted to heinous Sinners. They are ty'd up to their Plague, and there's no eſcaping. A bad Action is no ſooner conceived, then it brings forth its own Torment: So that he that will not endure ſomething, that he may not do evil, muſt endure a great deal becauſe he has done it. This it is, that brought Death into the World, and kindled

kindled Hell fire. We are therefore to cleanſe our Conſciences by Contrition, Confeſſion, and Satisfaction: Neither are we to ſhun the more grievous ſins only, but even thoſe too, which we eſteem as the leaſt and ſlighteſt; which though they do not hurry us immediately to Deſtruction, they do yet, inſenſibly diſſolve our ſtrength, weaken us, and bring us to ruine in the end. And if the Veſſel miſcarry, what matters it, whether it be ſwallow'd up at once, or by taking in water drop after drop, which being neglected, carries it to the bottom at laſt. The eaſier the prevention, the more ſhameful is the diſaſter; and the weaker the adverſary, the greater is the diſhonour of being overcome.

II. We muſt never expect to graft Vertue in the mind, till we have given over Hankering after even the ſmalleſt Vices. It ſignifies nothing, to have the Body in the Wilderneſs, and the Mind in *Egypt*. It is not enough to forgive injuries, and to relinquiſh our more notorious and beaſtly luſts, if we ſtill take pleaſure in lewd communication, and the vanities of this World. Ill habits muſt be torn up by

by the Roots, that they may never ſhoot again: It is not the bare lopping of the Branches that will ſerve the Turn. In ſome religious fits, we are apt to ſay (yes, and perchance to think ſo too) that we are now abſolutely reſolved upon a new life, and to quit the World with all the Corruptions and Vanities that attend it. Why do we not bolt the door then againſt them, but only put it to? Oh how we are troubled to think of the courſe we have led! And who is not? I beſeech you, Is there any man ſo wicked as not to diſallow himſelf in his moſt beloved ſins, even in the very act of committing them? But what avails it to renounce them in diſcourſe, and yet to embrace them in practice? No man has a Conſcience ſo ſeared, as not at ſome time or other to reflect upon his wickedneſs with deteſtation: But then they are ſoon friends again; whereas, he that is truly converted, lays the Ax to the root, and leaves not the leaſt ſtring behind him. He grows ſo jealous of his frailty, and ſo ſuſpicious of himſelf, that he ſtarts at the leaſt occaſion, at the very ſhadow of evil.

III. Why

III. Why do we ſo ridiculouſly cavil then, and urge the frailty of Humane Nature, in Plea againſt the Commands of the Almighty? Does not he that made us what we are, and gave us what we have, know beſt what we are able to do? We are to obey, not diſpute: And it is as well our intereſt, as our duty, ſo to do. Blind and impious Temerity! That Duſt and Aſhes ſhould preſume to expoſtulate with the moſt high God! As if he impoſed more upon us, than we are able to perform; and deſigned rather our Miſery than our Salvation. By this perverſneſs, of pretending difficulties where there are none, we provoke the diſpleaſure of the Lord againſt us; who hath enabled us to do much more than we imagine; as would appear, if we did put the ſtrength he hath given us to the Experiment. Our Task is not hard in it ſelf, but our Fears and Apprehenſions make it ſeem ſo. How many accidents and encounters, that were terrible to us at firſt, hath cuſtom made familiar and eaſie! Wherefore, let us not undervalue our ſelves, God will not deſert his Souldiers, but give them (even for the asking)

ability ſufficient for any warrantable undertaking.

IV. The readieſt way to maſter our Corruptions, is to propound to our ſelves, that every day is to be our laſt; for there is nothing that ſo much engages our Affections to this World, as the want of conſideration, how ſoon we are to leave it. Can any man be ſo forgetful, as to behold the daily Funerals that paſs before his eyes, without thinking of his end! And yet even among the dead themſelves, we think of nothing leſs, than we do of Death. There is not any thing ſo frequently ſeen, and ſo ſoon forgotten. But the time is coming that ſhall deliver us from the beaſtly fellowſhip of the Fleſh; diſpel this Cloud of Ignorance, and enlighten our darkneſs. Let the oldeſt man alive look back into the time paſt, and (if he can) pick but any one day out of his whole life, that was not tainted with ſome blemiſh or defect. Our Childhood we have conſumed in hobby-horſes and bawbles; our Youth in levities and luſts; our Manhood in crimes of a deeper dye; and when we have put all together, from our Cradle,

to

to our grey hairs, there remains nothing to us but anxiety of thought, and the ſad fruit of our iniquity. Alas! how miſerable is that man, that cannot look backward, but with ſhame; nor forward without terrour. Let him go to his Bags and his Coffers, that have coſt him ſo much ſweat, and trouble: What comfort will they ſpeak to him in his extremity? or what will all his ſenſual Pleaſures, his vain and empty Titles, Robes, Dignities and Crowns avail him in the day of his diſtreſs? what would a man give when that diſmal day comes, that he might begin the World again, to lead a new life? but wiſhes are then too late. We are to make uſe of time while we have it; and to forbear doing thoſe things now, which we ſhall wiſh undone hereafter; *It is no great matter to deny our Appetites for a moment, that we may be happy for ever.*

V. If a man upon his Death-bed were asked his opinion of his paſt Life, and what he thought of Riches, Dignities, and Worldly Delights; you ſhould hear him tell you quite another tale, than he did in his health; for at that hour men conſider what they ſay, and ſpeak what they

they think. Now although this Wiſdom comes with the lateſt, for him that is upon his *exit:* It may yet be of great benefit to us, if we will but learn from other peoples miſcarriages, to correct, or to prevent our own. Who but a mad man, when he may put to Sea in fair weather, will linger for a ſtorm? or defer all care of himſelf, till the laſt extremity, when he may ſave all at preſent, without any hazzard? Caution comes too late when a man is under water, and ſo does Prudence too, in the Grave. Thoſe great and holy men that have utterly renounced this World, and all that's in it, for the love of a better, have made it the ſtudy of their whole lives, to underſtand how to live, and how to die: And ſo hard a Leſſon have they found it unto fleſh and blood, that many of them, at their laſt breath, have not ſtuck to confeſs their ignorance. But we (forſooth) account it time enough in all conſcience, to betake our ſelves to that which is good, when, in truth, we are fit for nothing at all; and to begin our lives, at an age, to which few people have prolonged theirs: A prodigious folly, certainly, for a man to begin at the wrong end!

VI. Mon-

VI. Monſtrous heedleſneſs! to believe all this, and yet to live on, as we do: What is Time, but the paſſing of a ſhadow? Life, but a point? or leſs, if poſſible. How ſmall a diſtance is there betwixt the Cradle and the Tomb! Try if you can make the Sun ſtand ſtill but one day, one hour, one moment. No, no, it will not be; Time is inexorable, and will hold on its courſe till it has brought all created Nature to deſtruction. And yet ſo beſotted a Blindneſs poſſeſſes us, that we prefer this wretched inſtant, before a glorious Eternity. In the caſe of our frail and periſhable bodies we lay out for neceſſaries, and proviſions, and ſpare for no pains to procure them: But in that of our immortal Souls, we behave our ſelves, as if they were none of our concern. Let the Body be out of order, and there is nothing ſo troubleſome, but we can readily undergo to remove it; but in the diſtempers of the Soul, we are not only neglectful, but inſenſible. When was it ever ſaid to us, *Save your ſelves by Sea, or you are loſt*, and we protracted it? *Take of this Potion; 'tis bitter, but 'tis wholſome*, and we refuſed it? It is leſs than this, that

that God prescribes to us, for our eternal good, and we give no heed to it. If we happen to have a Law Suit, what a bustle we make with our Solicitors, and Breviates, seeing of Council, and tampering of Judges, to carry on the Cause? But in the great tryal of our Souls at the day of Judgment (which is at hand) and where Heaven or Hell is the question: There is no care taken, but we live on laughing and fooling, till we lose our selves beyond all Redemption, for want of Preparation. Let us therefore betake our selves to our wits, and put our affairs in order, as if we were every moment to be called to a reckoning. *This is true Philosophy, to separate Soul and Body by wisdom, before they come to be parted by necessity.*

VII. The thing we are principally to intend, (whether busie or idle, in labour or at rest) is this; to deliver our selves out of the power of Time and Casualties, by the anticipation of Eternity; which places us in a state of Tranquillity, that is steady and invariable. The Glutton in the Gospel is still begging the relief but of one drop of water to cool his Tongue,

Tongue, and condemned ſo to beg it to perpetuity, without obtaining it. Eternity is an everlaſting inſtant, not to be thought upon, or mentioned, without horror: It is a reſtleſs Wheel, it is a continued, an endleſs, and a ſtill commencing beginning. The ſerious thought of it is as wormwood in our cups of pleaſure: It ſtrikes us with aſtoniſhment and ſadneſs; it tames our rebellious ſpirits, and raiſes up the ſlothful Voluptuary to the love of Vertue; it facilitates all difficulties, ſweetens all our afflictions, and makes our misfortunes ſeem, not only ſhort, but eaſie. It is not in the power of man to expreſs or conceive this boundleſs Eternity. Were the whole Univerſe fill'd with numeral Figures, and as many Years (nay Ages) taken from Eternity, as there would be found Unites in the whole ſum, Eternity would be ſtill the ſame, without any diminution. He that conſiders the pains of Hell (as they are) to be ever beginning, and yet never at an end, muſt have a heart of Flint, not to trouble and repent at the thought of it.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Of Gluttony, the Evils of it, and the Remedies: And to know when we have ſubdued it.

I. THe firſt Vice we are properly to encounter, is Gluttony. This is the Sin that brought Death into the World, and miniſters matter in a great meaſure to the reſt. It was the Eating of the Forbidden Fruit, that ruin'd the whole Race of Mankind, even before they had a Being: And it is ſtill the weak ſide where the Devil lays his moſt dangerous temptations. From hence proceeds dulneſs of ſpirit, ſloth, wearineſs of every thing, ſcurrility, babling, debauchery, heavineſs of mind, and the diſſolution of all Vertues, prodigality, beggery, a long train of Diſeaſes, and Death it ſelf in the concluſion: This is it that ſwells our Bills of Mortality; for vicious humours contracted from exceſs in meats and drinks, are the food of almoſt all Diſeaſes. Other accidents may attempt, and threaten us, but this cuts us

us off. *Gluttony kills more than the ſword.*

II. Oh the infamy of being a ſlave to a mans Belly! a wretched carkaſs, with an inſatiable appetite! Our bodies are none of the largeſt; and yet in greedineſs, the vaſteſt, and the moſt voracious of living Creatures come not near us. One Wood (we ſee) maintains a great many Elephants; and Paſture of a few Acres, a great many Bulls: But for us, one World is hardly ſufficient. The Air, the Seas, and the Forreſts muſt be all rifled, to pleaſe our Palates. He that looks into the Offices of a luxurious Palace, and ſees the Troops of Servants ſweating, and hurrying up and down; the maſſacre of Beaſts, Fleſh and Fowl; and every thing afloat in the richeſt Wine; ſome to order the Plate, and cover the Table, others to ſerve up the Meat, ſo many to marſhal the Diſhes, others again to carve, and every man ready at his part: He that ſees, I ſay, the magnificence, and variety of theſe Entertainments, cannot but wonder at ſo horrible a profuſion for the Guts of one Family. Not that I would adviſe any

man to ſtarve himſelf; for the Belly is importunate, and muſt have daily food. But here lies the ſnare, we do the buſineſs of Pleaſure, under the pretence of *Neceſſity*. If we would inform our ſelves how ſmall a matter ſatisfies Hunger, let us conſider what we are capable of, and what we have need of; we ſhall then underſtand, that no man is driven upon exceſs, by neceſſity. *Nature contents her ſelf with a little, but the cravings of Luxury are boundleſs.*

III. Hunger takes no pleaſure at all in complement, or oſtentation; let it be ſatisfied, and no matter with what: So ſoon as the Reliſh is off from the Palate, the precious and the common are both alike. Let but him eat, that is hungry, and drink, that is a thirſt; whether his Bread be white or brown; or his Drink plain water out of the next Brook, or the choiceſt Wine refreſh'd with Snow, it is all one to Nature: Stay but the ſtomach, and quench the thirſt, ſhe looks for no more. All the quarters of the World muſt be hunted for Fiſh and Fleſh, ſeveral ſorts of Wines for the *Guſto*, and provoking ſawces, to gratifie our phantaſtical Appetites:

Appetites: And what are all these far-fetch'd Curiosities and Delicates in the end; but the Torments of a miserable Surfeit! *Epicurus* recommends Temperance to us, if it were for nothing else but the very pleasure of it. There's a great deal of difference, betwixt the plainest meat in the World to a good stomach, and the most delicious to one that is crop-sick. He that would discharge himself of all superfluous care for the Belly, let him but consider the end of all, and that he is only preparing a Treat for the Worms, This methinks should make a man so order his Body, as that his Mind may be never the worse for't. That's the best Diet undoubtedly, which is every where to be had, and without trouble, and neither burthensom to a mans Purse, nor to his Body. He is a great master of himself, that commands his Belly. The Body requires Nourishment, not Dainties; and we have been convinced of the superfluity of many things, by the want of them.

IV. But 'tis no such mighty business neither, to contemn Superfluities; give me the man that can cheerfully dispence

even with Neceſſities, that can content himſelf with Bread and Water, and with the Herbs of the Field, as well for Mans meat as for Beaſts; that eats only to ſuſtain and ſtrengthen nature, and to glorifie God; that takes his meat as a ſick man does his Phyſick, merely for healths ſake, without any regard to the taſte; that declines voluptuous Treats and Entertainments; and (at leaſt) moderates himſelf in the Pleaſures of the Palate, ſince he cannot totally extinguiſh them; and preſerves himſelf in purity both of Body and Spirit. The perfection of Chaſtity is a better proof of Abſtinence, than the bare taking down of the Body.

CHAP. V.

Of Luxury: The foulneſs of it: How apt we are to Relapſe into it: How to avoid it.

I. LUxury is a Brutal vice: and that, which of all others, puts a man the moſt out of countenance? Nor is it ſo ſhameful only in the practice, but the Apoſtle forbids us the very naming of what

what concerns it. The foulneſs of it may appear in this: That a man (if he has but the leaſt ſpark of modeſty or good nature in him) cannot forbear Bluſhing at the very thoughts of any Uncleanneſs committed, if he does but imagine that any body elſe knows of it. Nay, there are many people ſo tender and ſcrupulous in this point, that they'l run any hazard, rather than truſt their very Confeſſors with ſo ſcandalous a ſecret. He that falls into this bog, very rarely gets out again; and there's little hope of him that's infected with this Diſeaſe: For alas! what can man do in the caſe of Continence, which is the only Gift of God?

II. The firſt Remedy muſt be fervent Prayer to the Almighty, for Grace and Strength: And we are next, to reſiſt the very firſt motions to Impurity, and to ſhake them off, as we would do a burning coal from our Garments. If we come but once to deliberate, we are loſt. If we parly, we are upon the point of yielding. We muſt have a care of Idleneſs, High-feeding, Laſcivious Objects, looſe and wanton Company. Nothing (in

ſhort) is to be omitted in this difficulty. Nay the very beſt of men are not without their infirmities; certain latent diſpoſitions, which though we cannot properly call ſins, we find many times to prove the preludes to Wickedneſs, and if they gain but never ſo little upon us, it will be hard quitting them. He that will be great, muſt not deſpiſe little things. *The leaſt ſpark is enough to fire the largeſt City.*

III. Let every man have a care of too much confidence in himſelf. He that goes on, without doubting, is fallen already. How many Inſtances have we, of brave and eminent men, that after ſolemn Confeſſions, Victories and Exploits, even to admiration, have yet been ſurprized, and loſt at the ſight of a Woman! I do not ſpeak of *Sampſon*, *David* and *Solomon*, thoſe ancient and famous examples of Humane frailty, but others of freſher date, and which we ſee daily before our eyes. And if there were nothing elſe but a mans own weakneſs, methinks he ſhould be ſo conſcious of it, as to be humbled, and ſuſpect himſelf. What greater madneſs, than after ſo many experiments

of

of the errours of all Ages and Nations, ſtill to expoſe our ſelves to be worſted, in confidence of our own ſtrength! But this is the fate of our incredulous and ſtubborn Nature, to give no heed or credit to the Falls of others, till we are in the Pit our ſelves. God made Woman for a helper to man, but by the ſubtilty of the Serpent ſhe was wrought upon to be his deſtroyer: She wounds, burns and conſumes him. There is no *Hyæna*, no *Baſiliſk*, to what ſhe carries in her Voice and Eyes: Have a care of her Charms, as you love your Soul. *The whole Sex follows the old trade of driving man out of Paradiſe.*

IV. It is an ordinary thing, I know, to excuſe our ſelves, by ſaying, *we cannot avoid it; ſhe's of our Acquaintance, we mean no hurt in't.* But under theſe plauſible pretences, there lies more miſchief than we are aware of: For we fall by degrees into dangerous Liberties, unwary Diſcourſes, looſe Behaviour, wanton Merriments, enterchanging of Preſents, *&c.* till in the end, by little and little, we come, from the neglect of Modeſty, to juſt none at all. This Licenſe grows up-

on us by degrees, and he that bluſhes and trembles at the very appearance of a Woman to day, ſhall look Babies in her Eyes to morrow; play with her naked Breaſts, and feel the Poyſon at his Heart, before he is ſenſible of the danger. Thus by degrees, from dim-ſighted, our Reaſon comes to be ſtark-blind, and the divine Soul lies groveling upon the ground, without any conſideration, either of Heaven or of it ſelf, till the fire of our Luſts ſhall be ſwallowed up in that of Hell it ſelf. The ſad and miſerable end of a beaſtly and momentary pleaſure: As if we were all drunk with the juice of that Herb which is ſaid to make people *die laughing*.

V. Fools that we are! what would we be at? that have neither Wit enough to adviſe our ſelves, or to take counſel of others. Is it Pleaſure we ſeek? God hath provided Pleaſures eternal for us in Heaven. Thoſe of the World are deceitful, tranſitory and uncertain; ſhall we lay hold of theſe then, and quit our title to thoſe of the next? Where's our Reaſon? what is become of our Underſtanding? If we look upward toward thoſe that

are

are gone to Heaven before us; we ſhall find them ſuch, as here upon earth, mingled their bread with aſhes, and their drink with their tears; beſet on every ſide with perſecution and contempt; holding no intelligence at all with worldly comforts; and making prayers and tears their daily exerciſe. Their way to Heaven lay through Torments and Croſſes. But on the other hand, if we look downward into Hell, among the Troops of the damned, we ſhall there ſee (which they feel too late) the end and the reward of truſting to the falſe joys of this World, the delights of the Fleſh, and carnal Pleaſures. We ſhould do well to meditate upon this, if we believe it.

VI. But if Pleaſure in this World be the thing we covet, why do we not then give it our ſelves in the bleſſing of a well-compoſed and vertuous Mind? And that's a Pleaſure ſubſtantial, ſincere, unchangeable, and untainted: whereas the enjoyments of the Fleſh are weak, ſhort-lived, only varniſh'd over, bedawbed with Wine, and Perfumes, both afraid and aſhamed of the Light: lying moſt

in Bawdy-houſes, and Taverns, and ſuch other places as commonly find work for the Conſtable. If they are glorious without, they are yet moſt wretchedly ſordid within: They begin and end almoſt in the ſame moment, they periſh even in the very enjoyment. But the Pleaſure of the Mind is gentle, noble, invincible, ſteady and ſecure; and attended neither with Satiety, nor Repentance. It is neither accompanied with ſhame, nor followed with remorſe or ſadneſs; nor does it ever deſert him that profeſſes it. The way to this Pleaſure is to renounce all other; for *to contemn Pleaſure is the greateſt Pleaſure.*

CHAP. VI.

Of Avarice; the wickedneſs of it. The Poor and the Rich compared. The Deceit and the Vanity of Riches.

I. IT is the great cheat of Avarice, that it diſclaims it ſelf: For there is not any man will confeſs himſelf to be covetous. *I have a Family to provide for,* ſays one: *I would fain do ſome good among my poor*

poor Neighbours, cries another: A third is for building of Almshouses and Hospitals. And these are our pretences for hoarding up Riches; and when we have gotten them, we go on to get more, and spend our lives in the bare acquisition of what was at first pretended for our comfort or support, but part with nothing. What is a thirsty man the better for the sight of a pleasant Brook, or dabbling in it perchance with his finger, unless he take some of it into his stomach to relieve his drought? Just this is the case of an avaricious man with his money; he sees it, and handles it, but his mind is no vessel to receive it, and so never the better for it. God made the Soul only for himself, and it is he alone that can fill it.

II. Give the covetous man the Treasure of the whole earth; let him not only possess, but trample upon all that is rich and precious, all that is curious and costly in the Universe. Alas! the having of all this will but serve him for an Incentive to desire more. Nature is bounded, but Imagination is infinite. It is not a pin matter, what Money in the Coffer, or what Corn in the Barn, to him that is only intent

intent upon what he has not, without computing what already he has. The World it ſelf is too little for him, whom the whole World cannot ſatisfie. If we did but conſider the miſchiefs that accompany great Fortunes, and the Benefits they deprive us of, we ſhould ſoon find, with the bleſſed Apoſtle, that *Covetouſneſs is the root of all evil.* Thence come Frauds, Wars, Perjuries, Treaſon, Diſcord, Ambition, Robberies, Piracies, publick Tumults, domeſtick Treacheries, Corruptions in the Seat of Judgment.

III. Look but the poor and the rich man in the face, and compare their Countenances, and you ſhall ſee that the one, in the ſowreneſs of his looks, betrays the anxiety and ſolicitude of his thoughts: The others Brow is clear and open, in teſtimony of an honeſt and chearful mind. The rich mans happineſs is but from the teeth outward, a counterfeit ſatisfaction, with a Worm in his heart; when the poor man, without any mixture of trouble, enjoys a continual repoſe. The one betwixt the deſire of getting, and the fear of loſing, lyes

lyes expoſed to all the aſſauls of Fortune; (for *the more he has, the more he covets.)* The other is rich even in his poverty. His wiſhes are ſquared to his neceſſities: He fears nothing, for he hath nothing to loſe that he cares for. He ſpends the day merrily, and ſleeps ſoundly at night: Whereas the other, on the contrary, is never at eaſe, and the leſs ſenſe he has of his condition, the greater is his danger.

IV. A word now to the inſatiable Miſer, with all his Hoards, brave Houſes and Poſſeſſions: The time will come, (the time appointed from Eternity) when he muſt part with all his ſplendid Acquiſitions, Life and all; when all thoſe things muſt periſh too, for which he himſelf is likewiſe to periſh. He will then ſee the errour of admiring what he ſhould have deſpiſed, and of ſetting a value, ſo childiſhly, upon Trifles: Childiſhly, I ſay, ſaving only that Children play the fool upon cheaper terms. Their dotage is employed upon ſome pretty Shells, perchance, or Pibbles, that they find by the Sea-ſide; ours upon Gold and Precious Stones. I do not ſay, that where Providence

vidence hath given a man a plentiful Fortune, the Owner of it ſhould not make uſe of it: But I would have it honeſtly gotten; not by Fraud, Extortion or Injuſtice, nor with more carking and caring, than the thing is worth: We may take Money into our Coffers, but not into our Hearts, to the end that we may chearfully reſign our ſelves to the Will of God, either to want, or to abound. No man ſo rich as he that needs not riches. We are not to wait for the loſs of all by Thieves, perhaps, or Caſualties; but to ſtrip our ſelves by Anticipation; which is done, if we do but take away from our ſelves, by an indifference, whatſoever we might otherwiſe loſe by violence. *No man is maſter of himſelf, ſo long as he is a ſlave to any thing elſe.*

V. As to matter of State and Ceremony, we are to lay it utterly aſide, and to conform in our Clothes and Diet, not ſo much to example, as to Chriſtian Moderation and Vertue. Poverty it ſelf, with good Husbandry, may be emproved into Plenty. Let us but keep our ſelves from Thirſt, Hunger and Cold, Nature asks

asks no more. A Cottage may keep a man as warm as a Palace; and there is no absolute necessity of covering our Bodies with Silk. Is there no quenching of our Thirst, but in Chrystal? no cutting of our Bread, unless the Knife has an Agat Handle? We may wash as clean in an Earthen Vessel, as in a Silver, and see as well by a Candle in a Pewter-socket, as in a Plate. He that values himself for his Gold, is inconsiderable without it: How much better were it for us, to set our hearts upon those Riches, which neither Fortune, nor Death itself can ever take from us. Why should any man fear Poverty, that has the Treasure of a Kingdom within himself? There is the Kingdom of Heaven, in a good Conscience. He that seeks his own good, let him seek God alone, who is the only Good, the only Possession, and the only Treasure. *The world is of no value to him that dedicates himself wholly to God.*

VI. Oh the emptiness and Imposture, of all that we account delicate and glorious in this World! To see a man wrapt up in Gold, and Embroidery, with a long Retinue at his heels, and in a splendid

did equipage; how wonderfully are we taken with the Spectacle? And yet alas! All this is but a mere pomp, and oſtentation of vanities, that leave us in the very moment that they pleaſe us: And it is not from the Schools of the Philoſophers, nor from the Croſs of Chriſt, nor from the eternal Wiſdom alone, that I draw this Obſervation; but from the World it ſelf, and thoſe that have moſt courted and adored it. What ſatisfaction had *Haman* in all his Wealth, Power and Dignity? *No, no,* ſays he (in a full Audience) *I reckon all this as nothing, ſo long as I ſee* Mordechai *ſitting at the Kings Gate.* What a Mockery, what a Blindneſs is this! I have often read and heard indeed, that the Pleaſures of the Fleſh and of this World are as nothing, compared with thoſe of Vertue and Eternity; but to pronounce them to be as nothing, in reſpect even of nothing it ſelf, this goes a great deal further: So that in effect, in the contempt of nothing, we do nothing. But that we may not want matter to work upon, let us contemn and repreſs our Luſts, that we may be better acquainted with Poverty, and learn to meaſure the true value of things by

by the uſe of them. Now *the way to bring our ſelves with eaſe to a contempt of the World, is to think daily of leaving it.*

CHAP. VII.

Of Anger: The Character of an angry man: The Effects, Cauſes, and Remedies of it.

I. TO be angry at Anger, is almoſt the only juſtifiable exerciſe of that Paſſion: For it is againſt a moſt execrable and outragious Monſter; an Affection ſo unquiet and turbulent, that if it once ſeiſes us, it unmans us. It is, in one word, a *ſhort Madneſs*, that carries a man head-long to Blood and Revenge, without any regard to Friends, good Manners, or indeed, to his own Security; for, to take away another mans life, he'll run any hazzard of his own, and (as in the fall of a Houſe) daſh himſelf to pieces upon the ruines of what he carries down before him. Neither is it a brutal only, but a moſt ungraceful Paſſion. The Eyes burn and ſparkle, the Veins ſwell, the Hair ſtands on end, the Teeth grating, the Mouth all in a ſome, the

Voice ſhrill and piercing, the Countenance fierce and terrible, the Brow frowning, the Head joggling and nodding, and the whole Body in a continual and moſt uncomely Agitation: To ſay nothing of the menacing Actions and Geſtures, clutching and ſtriking of the hands, beating the Breaſt, ſtamping, and tearing the Hair, rending the Clothes, and all the Blood in the Body boiling in the Face. How abominable muſt this be in the Mind, that ſhews it ſelf ſo deteſtable in the Countenance? The Poets draw the Furies with Fire-brands and Snakes, howling and yelling, with hideous outcries, which might ſerve for no ill Picture of a Man in choler; if I may call him a Man, who by his beaſtual-cruelty, and ſalvage-fierceneſs, ſeems to have caſt off all the Advantages and Affections of Humanity. One may keep other Vices private, but this breaks out at the Eyes, and diſcovers it ſelf in the Air of the Face: Like fire, it devours all before it, and the more we ſtrive to ſuppreſs it, the more furiouſly it burns. *An angry man is utterly uncapable either of Moderation or Reproof.*

II. As

II. As for other Vices they are confin'd, we ſee, to certain Bounds and Limits; but Anger flies at all, and there is not any thing that ſcapes it, be it never ſo ſacred. Do we not invade Heaven it ſelf, both with open Blaſphemies, and ſecret Murmurings, againſt the Power, Goodneſs, and Providence of the Almighty? And our Anger extends it ſelf not only to thoſe that we think have done us an Injury, but to thoſe too, that poſſibly may hereafter do us one: So ingeniouſly do we improve our vain Imaginations, that we fall upon any man that has the power to diſoblige us, as if he had done it already. Nay, we are many times in a Rage, we know not at whom, or for what, but yet we bluſter and fret; and for want of other matter to work upon, we fall upon our ſelves. Nor is it the Injury only that moves us; for we do frequently wreak our ſpight upon things inanimate, that cannot (properly) either diſoblige or affront us. As, for a Man to cut his Cloak to pieces, throw Diſhes and Candleſticks about the Houſe, ſplit Pens in a Rage, and tear Paper, becauſe things will not go as he would

would have them: What can be more ridiculous? The breaking of a Glaſs is enough to put many a man out of his Senſes; The miſlaying of a Napkin, the Screek of a Table drawn upon the Floor, and a thouſand other things, which do neither deſerve our Anger, nor feel it. A Reſty Jade, a Barking Cur, the Buzzing of a Flie in our Ears, the Stinging of a Gnat: Theſe forſooth, are Provocations to tranſport us beyond all Patience, and Death without Mercy, to the poor Animal that offends us. *How great a Madneſs is it, to puniſh Brutes and things inſenſible, for the Tranſgreſſions of Reaſonable Creatures?*

III. If we proceed now to take a view of Anger in the Effects, we ſhall find it the greateſt Plague that ever infeſted Humane Nature: How many Murthers, Towns laid waſte, whole Nations utterly depopulated, Heaps of ſlaughter'd Bodies, (as if the Sword vy'd with the Peſtilence) and the Rivers running Blood. Look upon the Ruines of the Nobleſt Cities of the World, unpeopled Deſerts, Conflagrations, poyſon'd Fountains, extinguiſh'd Families. Conſider all this, and

and you have here before your eyes, the Fruits and Works of Anger, I ſhould think, that we are no longer a Society of Men, but a Multitude of Beaſts, were it not that I find Beaſts of the ſame kind to agree among themſelves, whereas Men are ſtill worrying of one another. Now there is this farther Miſchief in Anger; It defaces the Image of God in us, whoſe Works are altogether peaceable and calm. It caſts a Miſt before our eyes, ſo that we are not able to diſcern the Truth our ſelves; and it makes us ſtubborn and uncounſellable towards others. It diſturbs and diſtracts all the Faculties of the Soul, and let the Diſeaſe be never ſo foul, the Reputation it has gotten with the People, keeps it yet in countenance; for with the Rabble, *Anger paſſes for the Mark of a Man of Honour.* But let us rather conſider now, what Remedy in the Caſe; and if we cannot utterly take it away, how we may bring it at leaſt, to ſome ſort of Reaſon and Moderation.

IV. The beſt way will be to begin with the Contempt or Neglect of the firſt Motive to it; for if we once loſe ground, it

it will be hard recovering it: We are at the mercy of That, and not That at Ours; when the Enemy is within the Gate, he'll hardly take Conditions of his Priſoner. It is a much eaſier matter to keep him out, than to Govern him, when he's entred. In the upper Regions of the Air, we find neither Clouds nor Tempeſts, but altogether Serenity and Quiet; the Thunder is below. So is it with a great and generous Mind; It ſtifles the very firſt Motions to Diſpleaſure; It gives not way ſo much as to a licentious word, but ſtands firm in a Station of Tranquillity and Compoſure; very well underſtanding, that by Tranſports of Anger, Evils are not remov'd, but made worſe. It is with Cholerick men, as with Birds that are lim'd, the more they flutter, the faſter they are, and the more they ſtruggle, the more entangled. The Anger does us more hurt than the Injury. He that is angry upon the Apprehenſion that another man contemns him, does his Adverſary too much Honour, if he values it; and thinks too meanly of himſelf, if he revenges it. *Revenge is a Confeſſion of Trouble, and it is the part of a narrow Soul, to meditate a*

ſerious

ſerious Revenge for an Imaginary Miſchief.

V. In the Caſe of lying under a Slander, the Queſtion is not, What becomes another man to ſay or do; but what we are to ſay or do our ſelves. Becauſe another man is waſpiſh and perverſe; Am I to break my peace for't, and to be froward too, my ſelf? We are to imitate our Maker. How many impious Wretches does God ſuffer to enjoy the common Benefits of Nature? And yet among Mortals, one wicked man will not be perſwaded to endure another. Let us apply our ſelves to mend all at home; which we may do, without concerning our ſelves ſo much, for the Reforming of others, which we cannot do. Are we not ſinners? How little then is that we ſuffer, in compariſon of the Hell which we have deſerved? Are our Ears ſo delicate, that we cannot bear a Reproach? The Fault (and the Shame too) is his that does an Injury, not his that ſuffers it. The Sufferer is only to look upon his Affliction as a Portion allotted him from Eternity for his greater Good. *Forgive, and you ſhall be forgiven*, is the Word of God

God himself. He that wakens not at this Thunder, is not asleep but dead. *It is our Interest to pardon others, as the Condition of being pardon'd our selves.*

VI. Among many Incentives to Anger, I reckon Suspicion to be the slieſt and most insinuating of all. Let us away with it therefore upon any terms. *Good Lord* (we cry) *how coldly, how strangely such a one look'd upon me! He would hardly take any notice of me. He gave me a word or two, and so went his way.* Of this we may be certain, he that is jealous, shall never want matter or colour for it; most people being apt to believe the worst. An ill Construction of things goes a great way in the very Injury we complain of: We are therefore to deal plainly, and judge charitably. And we are to say to our selves on the behalf of the Absent: *Who knows but this may be all a Story? In ill Reports it is not good to be over-credulous, and to take up a Pique at a venture, before we fully understand the matter. Time and leisure will discover all.* In a Trial at Law, no man is cast without a proof, let the Cause be never so trivial: And shall we dare then to condemn a Friend without

out a *Hearing?* He must be a very weak man, that presently believes all he hears. Some there are that spread false Reports with an Intention to deceive; others again, do but tell what they hear, and are deceived themselves. What is spoken in private, is almost not spoken at all. What can be more unreasonable, than to suppress the cause of our Displeasure, and yet publish the effects of it? It is good sometimes to see and not see, and to hear and not hear. *He that seems not to know of an Injury, is not bound to take notice of it.*

VII. When I am told that any body speaks ill of me, my course shall be, to ask my own Conscience, if I did not speak ill of him first; and then to make it my own case, *How many have I spoken ill of my self?* This Reflection will make a man moderate; if not for the love of Vertue, yet for his own sake at least. Shall I play the Epicure my self, and inveigh against Luxury in another? put a Knight of the Post to declaim against Perjury? Be my self perfidious, and challenge exact Fidelity from my neighbour? Why should not other People talk

as freely of me, as I do of them? I am to bethink my ſelf, nt only what I ſuffer, but what I do; and not to reprehend that in another, which I find in my own breaſt. We are all bad enough, and to bear with one anothers infirmities, is but common Equity. Nay, ſuppoſe that we are not as yet guilty, who knows how ſoon we may be ſo? *Let him that thinks he ſtands, take heed leſt he fall.*

VIII. The Wounds of an Enemy, the Offences of a Friend, the Diſobedience of a Child, the Careleſneſs or the Treachery of a Servant, are things ſo familiar, that we may as well wonder a at Roſe in the Spring, or an Apple in Autumn, as at any of them. A man that walks the ſtreets of a populous City, muſt expect to meet with a ſlip in one place, a ſtop in another, the Daſh of the Kennel in a third: Juſt ſuch are the Adventures of Life, and with the ſame Conſideration are they to be undergone. When a lewd perſon caſts a Reproach upon a Good Man, let them but both do their parts, and there's no hurt done. It is in the Nature of the one to do Miſchief, and it is the Duty of the other to requite

Evil

with Good. We are to try if we can mend him; which is never to be effected by Revenge, but rather by Patience and Obligations. It may perchance work a thorow Reformation upon him; but very probably, it will quiet and ſweeten him at the leaſt: Or however, we our ſelves ſhall moſt certainly be the better for it, if he be not. Well! *There's ſuch a one is my mortal Enemy, he has ſpoken the baſeſt and the moſt diſhonorable things of me.*——How am I now to behave my ſelf in this caſe? Why truly, according to the Rules of Charity, and of good Diſcretion: *I have this but at ſecond hand; I can hardly believe it. Or, if he did ſay it, ſome body has abus'd him: I am confident he had no ill meaning in it. Nay, it may be, he ſaid it on purpoſe that I ſhould hear on't again, and be the better for't. The truth on't is, he hath right on his ſide, for I cannot much deny the thing; and I'm e'en well enough ſerv'd for beginning with him.* But after all this, what if it ſhall be found to be mere Malice, and a Deſign upon an Innocent Perſon. Was not my Saviour more innocent, and incomparably a greater Sufferer? I am to ſay with the Prophet, *I was dumb, and opened not my*

mouth, becauſe it was thy doing. Let us all look to our own ways, and have a care, that what other People ſay or do amiſs, prove not unto us an occaſion of falling.

IX. But what is it that troubles us? Opinion? If ſo; It is but removing that Opinion, and we are ſecure; and this methinks might be done by a very ordinary way of Reaſon. Nothing can hurt us, unleſs we joyn with it to hurt our ſelves. The Mind is ſafe and inacceſſible; out of the reach of Injuries and Accidents. It moves it ſelf, and in judging of Externals, it makes every thing only to be, as it is taken. *My Adverſary* (ſays one) *is certainly the vileſt Creature upon the Face of the Earth.* Let him alone then, ſay I, and leave him to be puniſh'd by ſome other hand: Or however, he has his Torment already in his Tranſgreſſion. *He's a man of Reaſon, and I wonder he can allow himſelf in theſe Liberties.* I prethee wonder at thy ſelf too, and begin the Reformation at home, upon thy own Impatience, and *learn to overcome Evil with Good.* But *we have other mens faults in ſight, and our own behind us. Oh the Pleaſure of Revenge,* ſays the Vindictive man.

man. *Let him take it then*, ſay I; upon condition, that he fall upon his greateſt Enemy firſt. Let him begin with his extravagant Fury and rage. Is not he a mad man that runs into the ſtreets to beat Boys for breaking his Windows, when he has Thieves in his Houſe, that are ready to rifle him, and cut his Throat? When *Plato*'s hand was up in Choler, to ſtrike an untoward Servant, he conſider'd better of it, and checked himſelf; *Sirrah*, ſays he, *I would box ye, if I were not angry with you*: Judging it more for his credit to chaſtiſe his Paſſion, before he meddled with his Man; and giving to underſtand, that a Cholerick Maſter deſerves the Laſh better than a Negligent Servant. *You ſhall very rarely find any man Brave, that is Furious.*

X. Judges and Publick Magiſtrates may be allowed to put on a Countenance of Severity and Diſpleaſure; but if at any time it comes up to Anger, let it be ſo ordered, as only to wait upon Reaſon, but not to preclude it. Offenders are to be reprehended, and corrected too, but without Paſſion. So long as there are bad men in the World, there will be Vil-

lany in it; and he that is resolved to fret himself for whatsoever he sees amiss, shall never have one quiet hour while he breathes. We are not angry at the Heats and Colds in their proper course and season: No less natural are the Indignities we suffer from wicked men, and no otherwise ought we to concern our selves for them. A wise and a good man should deal with Malefactors, as a Physician does with mad Men; do them all the good he can, and let their Extravagancies go for nothing. The only Revenge for a Slanderer, is to let him alone, as if he were not worth a Revenge. The less his Calumny works upon another, the more it works upon himself, by disappointing him of the end and pleasure of his Contumely. But *'tis a shame*, you'll say, *for a man to be contemn'd, and not to vindicate his Honour.* How great a shame is it then, to fear to be contemned? for no man fears Contempt, but he that deserves it. A wise man reckons nothing disgraceful but sin; for he governs himself, not according to the judgment of men, but of God. If any man despise me, if any man hate me, let him look to it; it shall be my care not

to

to deſerve either. Patience is invincible, and triumphs in the end over Nature it ſelf. It is a kind of Imitation of God himſelf; who forgives all, ſuffers all, and with his Mercies tranſcends our Iniquities. *It is more glorious to take no notice at all of an Injury, than to pardon it.*

CHAP. VIII.

Of Envy and Sloth, with their Deſcription and Cure.

I. THe Envious man is not only the firſt, but the greateſt Plague to himſelf, He preys upon his own Bowels, before he meddles with his Neighbours Goods; and it is not in this, as in other Vices, where the Puniſhment follows the Sin, for here it goes before it, and yet keeps it company too, for they go hand in hand together. A Diabolical Affection! That another mans Happineſs muſt be my Torment; and that which makes him fat, muſt make me lean. In other ſins, we find only an oppoſition to this or that particular Vertue: But Envy per-

verts the very nature of things, and profeſſes open Enmity to all Goodneſs. Firſt, to God himſelf, whoſe Nature it is (humanely ſpeaking) to communicate all his Mercies and Bleſſings. Next, to the Saints and Angels, who rejoyce in the Comforts of their Companions, as if they were their own. Thirdly, to Chriſtian Charity, which bids us do good even to our Enemies. And laſtly, to the Law of Nature, which commands us to wiſh other people as happy as our ſelves. *Envy is a kind of blear-ey'd Affection, it cannot endure to look againſt the Light.*

II. Satan indeed is envious, but it is againſt Men, not his Fellow-Devils: Whereas in our Envy, (worſe than the Devils themſelves) we fall foul one upon another: A ſign of a mean and abject mind; for we envy nothing but what we think above us. He that would deliver himſelf from this Diſtemper, muſt take his heart off from this tranſitory World, and fix it upon a better. *The love of Eternity, is the Death of Envy.* He that has ſet his heart upon Heaven, can never envy any mans Enjoyments upon Earth.

Earth. It were as if a Prince ſhould envy a Cobler. He reckons the World, and all the Glories of it, not worth a ſerious thought. We have enough to do (a man would think) to ſtruggle with our own Affictions, without vexing our ſelves at the Proſperity of others. *No man ſhall ever be Happy, ſo long as the ſight of a Happier man than himſelf can make him miſerable.* If by envying the Wealth, the Abilities, the Dignity of our Neigbours, we could transfer all to our ſelves, it were ſomething: But this is never to be done by Envy; by Love, in ſome meaſure, it may: For by loving what's good in another, we make it our own.

III. We may couple Envy and Sloth together; for they both agree in an abject Heavineſs of Mind. The Envious mans Trouble is to ſee any body elſe happy; and the Slothful mans, to deſpair of being ſo himſelf: And none but pitiful Wretches are ſubject to either of theſe Paſſions. *Sloth is the Vice of a languiſhing Spirit*, that's weary of every thing that's good; and for fear of blocks and Difficulties in the way, ſhrinks at the very thought of any Generous Enter-

prize. *It will, and it will not.* The Sluggard is various and unconſtant; a burthen to himſelf, a trouble to others: He's perpetually wiſhing himſelf out of the World, weary of his Life, and the Contriver of his own Misfortunes. He's like a Top, in continual Agitation: The Whip drives him about, but 'tis only round, not Forward: He ſtops ſtill at half-way, and goes through with nothing. All his Works are inſipid, and (like warm Water) a Vomit both to God and man. This ſtupid Drowſineſs muſt be ſhak'd off, and a generous Reſolution taken up in the place of it, or we are undone for ever. *As the Bird is made to fly, ſo is Man born to labour:* And ſince Labour and Travel are our Portion, why ſhould we not rather take pains to be happy, than to be miſerable? Let us be never ſo lazy to Godward, the World will yet find us work enough to do. One man labours for an Eſtate, another for a Title, or an Office; when half that trouble and diligence would ſecure us a bleſſed Eternity, and no body looks after it: But *Vices and Vanities come to a better Market:* The greater is our ſhame, to be ſo dull and careleſs in a matter of that

that Importance, as not to endure the Labour of one Moment, for an Eternal Reward. There is nothing ſo hard, but Courage, with Gods Bleſſing, may overcome. We fancy Difficulties, where there are none. Whatever the Mind impoſes upon it ſelf, it obtains. He that does what he can, does as much as he needs to do. *God helps the willing.*

CHAP. IX.

Of Pride, Ambition, and Vain-Glory. The Deſcription of a Proud Man. The Vanity of Dignities, and the Dangers. The Evils of High-Mindedneſs, and the Cure.

I. PRide, Ambition, and Vain-Glory are Vices that are very near akin: And they are to other ſins, as the Sea is to the Rivers, the Source and Fountain of them all. When a man comes once to be blown up with this Tumour of Adoring Himſelf, farewel all Reverence and Reſpect, both to God and Man: And if there be no way to Glory, but by Villany and Fraud, by the Ruine or Death

Death of his Brother; *That's the way h'ell take, without any difficulty or ſcruple.* The Proud man is abominable to God, and intolerable to Mankind: All his faculties and ſtudies are bent upon Popular Applauſe. He takes wonderful Delight in the Contemplation of his own Abilities, and to think what pity 'tis, ſuch Men as he are not employed at the Helm. He's *as bold as blind Bayard*; and *puts his Oar into every mans Boat*; ever magnifying himſelf, and deſpiſing all others. And yet all this is done under a Mask of Humility, for fear he ſhould be ſuſpected of Ambition. If he miſs his end, or fall into Diſgrace, the whole World is too little to hear his Story, and he makes it his buſineſs to ſtir up Brawls and Diſputes. No man ſo inſolent and domineering to his Inferiours; nor ſo arrant a Slave to thoſe that are above him. He'll fawn upon ye like a Spaniel, and you ſhall find him as tame as a Mutton. If there be any thing in him that's good, he has the Arrogance to challenge it to himſelf, as if God Almighty had no hand in't. He loves to be in at every thing, and to talk loud and Magiſterially, of matters that he underſtands no more than a Gooſe.

Gooſe. He is a great meddler in other peoples affairs; raſh in his Judgment, and ſevere in his Cenſure. He's much better at ſpying out his Neigbours Faults, than his Vertues. He has a kind of diſdainful Singularity in his Port, Words, Looks, Actions, and Ways. He is not to be wrought upon either by Correction, Caution, or good Advice. He wants abundance of good things, which he fancies he has; and thoſe which really he is poſſeſt of, are nothing ſo great as he imagines them. And this it is that makes him gall and fret himſelf; as who ſhould ſay, *Good Lord! What an Age are we fallen into! when men of Parts are ready to beg their bread, and ſuch as I am, come to be neglected!* He is afflicted with a perpetual Palpitation of the heart; and it can hardly be otherwiſe with one that is continually upon the Tip-toe, and ſtreining at (Honour) a thing which is out of his reach. *Pride is the Foundation of all Evil.*

II. If we will know the Difference between the ſmalleſt Particle of Eternal Bliſs, and the whole ſum of what appears

pears to be desirable in this World (Kingdoms, Empire, nay the intire Universe it self) let us but lay them in the Scale, one against the other, and the Earth, with all the Pomps and Pleasures of it, are not so much as a Leaf, or a Feather in the Balance. Let us look upward then, and address our selves to the end, for which we were created, and laying aside all vain Opinions of our own Excellencies, let us examine our selves, and take a true estimate of our Worth and Value. He that is proud in a mean Condition, certainly if he had been born to a Crown, there would have been no enduring him. Now I would have every Christian to prize himself, not as the Son of *Cæsar*, but (which is more) as the Son of God, redeemed by the precious Blood of Christ. This is an Extraction that is truly Honourable: Why do we not glorifie our selves upon this account, but rather lie groveling upon the Earth, to the scandal of our Divine Original? God is our Father, who hath elected us to the Dominion of the Heavens, and the Stars, and given us an Assurance of an everlasting Possession. Here lies our Glory, our Nobility, our Comfort:

Comfort: Here we may lawfully boaſt. Let us therefore raiſe our Eyes and our Hearts, and frame our Lives and Manners to the Likeneſs of our Father which is in Heaven. This is the way that leads to True, and to Immortal Honour.

III. As for Crowns and Scepters, what are they but Golden Fetters, and glaring Miſeries? which, if men did but truly underſtand, there would be more Kingdoms than Kings to govern them. *A great Fortune is a great Slavery; and Thrones are but uneaſie Seats*, and ſo they find them that poſſeſs them, let the Multitude conceive of them what they pleaſe. That Felicity cannot but be troubleſome to the Ruler, that makes him burthenſome to his People. And when it comes to that once, how ſick they grow of that Splendor which charmed and dazled them before! What Contemplations and Philoſophiſing upon the Bleſſings of Privacy and Freedom, and the Vanity of Earthly things! They look then with Terror upon Death and the Laſt Judgment: And all the Greatneſs that they have purchas'd with ſo much Sweat and Blood, ſhrinks to nothing at the

the very thought. Let us therefore ſo live, that we may appear with Comfort before the Great Tribunal. *He that humbles himſelf now, ſhall be exalted hereafter.*

IV. He that thinks he ſhall be ſafe and quiet, when he is great, is directly out of his wits. Many Liberties may be taken in a private Condition, that are dangerous in a Publick. The higher we are raiſed, the more eminent are our Infirmities: There's no concealing of any thing upon the top of the Houſe. We have loſt even the Tranquillity that we had before. There's not a day, not an hour, that we can call our own. And then the Fall is in a manner from Heaven to Hell. How can we then expect Peace and Repoſe in a Station, where all that ever went before us, have encountred Hazards and Trouble, if not Death it ſelf? How many Princes have been poyſoned at their very Tables, betray'd in the Arms of their Miſtreſſes? *Cæſar* was murthered in the Senate-houſe. He that ſtands high upon a ſlippery place, and the brink of a Precipice, *God have mercy upon him:* But the man that ſtands

ſtands below, upon the firm Ground, needs not fear falling. In our Greatneſſes, we are to conſider, that every man that admires and flatters us, envies us too in his heart. What with our open, and our ſecret Enemies, we are never ſecure. We are betray'd by our Servants, our Friends, our Relations. But theſe are the ſins and miſeries of Courts, not of Cottages. *He that lies cloſe, lives quiet. He fears no body, of whom no body is afraid.*

V. A man could hardly forbear laughing, to ſee a Horſe or a Dog, take upon himſelf an Authority over the reſt of his kind: And is it not more ridiculous for a Man to do it, becauſe he has more Money perhaps, or more Power? Proud Duſt and Aſhes! to exalt himſelf upon his own Bottom, when he has nothing good in him, but what he has received from above. We can call nothing our own, but our ſins. Let us render Glory then, for what we have received, unto him that gave it. Do we prefer one Horſe before another, becauſe he has more Meat, or gayer Trappings? No, by no means; but we reckon him to be the

the better, that's the fleeter. No more is a Man to be eſteemed for any thing apart from himſelf. But *I'm a Perſon of Quality*, ſays one, *and the beſt man in the Company.* The very ſaying of ſuch a thing, is a Forfeiture of the Honour he pretends to; for no man is truly Honourable, but a Good man, with whom this Titular Honour is of no Accompt. True Nobility does not advance it ſelf, and the great Ornament of an Illuſtrious Life is Modeſty. *Humility goes a great way in the Character even of the moſt Glorious Prince.*

VI. If we would but take a meaſure of our little Bodies, and make a Search into our Infirmities, we ſhould find much to humble us, and very little or nothing to brag of. The Philoſophers tell us, that *the world is but a Point:* And yet we muſt be dividing even of this Point into Kingdoms and Dominions. The Earth we trample upon ſhall ere long laid upon us; and of all our Poſſeſſions, we ſhall have only ſo much left, as will ſerve to cover a cold and rotten Carcaſe. And is not here a goodly Foundation, think ye, for all our great and mighty

mighty Projects? This Conſideration methinks, ſhould put a Check to our furious and inſolent Paſſions: There's no deſigning of Conqueſts, and ranging of Armies in the Grave. When the mad Humour is over, we ſhall come then (though too late I fear) to underſtand the Emptineſs of Names and Titles; and that they are like Glaſs, the Brighter, the Britler; and the more they ſhine, the ſooner they are broken. *The Oak that has been an Age a growing, is cut down in an hour.*

VII. He that withdraws himſelf from Company, has cut off one dangerous Temptation: For Pride ſhews it ſelf more or leſs, in proportion to the number of Spectators. People dreſs and trick up themſelves to be ſeen. Are not all the Exceſſes of Luxury, and Magnificence, for Oſtentation? Did ever any man expoſe the Pomp of his Vanity and Riot in a Deſert? Ambition loves to ſhew it ſelf in the Face of the World; and is never ſo well pleaſed as with a Popular Applauſe. When the Bee has made her Honey; the Horſe finiſh'd his Courſe; the Tree brought forth its Fruit,

Fruit, their Buſineſs is at an End: But the Man that is ſtruck with Vain-Glory, accounts all the reſt as nothing, without making himſelf the Idol of the Multitude, and to be adored, flattered, and pointed at by the Rabble. But certainly did we but duly conſider who they are that commend us, we ſhould hardly think them worth our Courtſhip. They are a vain and fickle ſort of men, the dregs of Mankind, and made up of Phrenſie and Contradiction. They are ſhort-liv'd, both the Beſtowers and the Receivers of theſe Applauſes. The Earth it ſelf is but a Point, and this is done but in a corner even of that Point. There were divers Diſſenters too, and ſcarce a man of all the reſt that knows his own Mind. *But 'tis a brave thing for a Man to make himſelf famous to Poſterity*; that is to ſay, to thoſe whom we never did ſee, nor ever ſhall. Why are we not as well troubled, that no body talk'd of us before we came into the World, as delighted to think how we ſhall be ſpoken of, after we are gone out of it. Nay, let us give it for granted, that our Memories ſhall be perpetuated, and our Names live for ever. What then? what ſhall we be the

the better for this when we are dead? Or to come nearer, what are we the better for this ſame thing called Fame, even while we are living? A man is many times commended, where he is not, and tormented where he is. The Value of every thing is in it ſelf; and it ſelf; and it is neither the better for a good word, nor the worſe for wanting it. The Sun would be every jot as glorious without Spectators, as with them. The Roſe is never the ſweeter, nor the pleaſanter; the Diamond is never the brighter, for an Encomium. It is a ſtrong proof of a generous Mind, for a man to be content with himſelf, and not to depend upon the Breath of the Common People for his Satisfaction. He that covets Praiſe, does not deſerve it; for what is there in us, that is Praiſe-worthy? Frail and miſerable Wretches that we are! (and at the beſt, but Unprofitable Servants.) If there be any man that has the Confidence to juſtifie himſelf, and ſay he has done his duty; let him have a care, that he be really what he would be thought to be; and that he approve himſelf in that which the World eſteems him for. Our Being, Life and

Reaſon,

Reaſon, we ow to Almighty God, and the only thing we can claim to our ſelves, is our Iniquity. *Nothing we are, and nothing we have to boaſt of; and till we acknowledge this, we ſhall never be any thing.*

CHAP. X.

Of the Government of the Body, and the Senſes. How far the Body may be indulged. The Luſt of the Eye, and Exceſs in Apparel are condemned.

I. IN the Entertainment of our Bodies, we are to take care, that they be kept in Obedience to the Mind, on the one hand; and want nothing that is neceſſary for Health, on the other. We are to provide for them, but not wholly to ſerve them. Give me Meat, to lay my Hunger; Drink, to quench my Thirſt; Clothes, to keep me warm; and Lodging, to ſhelter me from the Weather; I'll ask no more: Nay, we are to ſuſpect all Superfluities; for, *Whatſoever is beyond a Competence, is a Snare.* He that is over-ſolicitous for his Body, is the contrary

trary for his Soul: And certainly we are born to Nobler Ends, than to be Slaves to our Carcaſes; which we are no otherwiſe to conſider, than as the Cages and Priſons of our Minds. A wiſe and a good man does not ſo behave himſelf, as if his Body were the main end of his Being; but he takes care of it, becauſe he cannot live without it. The Body is the Inſtrument of the Soul; and 'tis not for a Workman to neglect his Trade, and ſpend his whole time in ordering his Tools. It is the ſign of a Sot, to be always tending of the Body.

II. Since it is by the Windows of the Senſes, that Death enters into the Soul, we are to draw them, as much as may be, from the earthly Life, to the heavenly, and to keep them from being altogether taken up with worldly Delights. (For we are to uſe them as Servants, not as Maſters.) In the firſt place, we are to ſet a Guard upon our Eyes. There is not any thing that more powerfully moves the Imagination, ſtirs the Appetite, or works upon the Mind, than a wandring Glance; and the Miſchief is done in a moment. Wherefore let the inward

inward Eye accompany the exterior, that we may ſee God in every thing we look upon; and when we ſhall have once learn'd to adore him in his Creatures, our next ſtep will be, the Contemplation of his Divine Majeſty, and to worſhip him in Himſelf. *A delicate well-dreſt Woman, is an elaborate Luxury.* There's Death in her very Looks, and if you ſtand to gaze upon her, you're undone. Comedies, Balls, and Publick Spectacles do but weaken the Mind, and fill it with Toys, that take us off from the Conſideration of better things. *One Errour in the Eye, begets another in the Affections.*

III. Hearing is the Senſe of Diſcipline; the Gate by which the Notions of Truth and Wiſdom are convey'd into the Mind. If the Paſſage of the ear be not narrowly watch'd, We ſhall entertain Lies and Fables for Verities, and Folly for Wiſdom. We muſt keep out all Slanderers, Tale-beares, News-mongers, Babblers, Buſie-bodies, Idle Impertinents, and whatſoever elſe is beſide our main Buſineſs. As in Muſick, a Man is not only affected upon the very Inſtant of hearing it, but the Harmony leaves an Impreſſion

Impreſſion behind it, that works upon him when it is over; ſo in Converſation, a lewd Diſcourſe, though it does us no hurt perchance at preſent, will be yet running in our heads afterward, and create in us evil Diſpoſitions. The leſs we hear Men about our ears, the more ſhall we hear God in our hearts. As to Perfumes and precious Odors, they are an effeminate kind of Luxury. Let us ſweeten our Manners, for it is more noble and manly, to indulge our Souls, than our Noſtrils. The Taſte is to be humbled by Abſtinence and Sobriety. The Touch by Diſcipline, Mortifications, and Auſterities. Is it not better to puniſh the Body, and preſerve it, than ſo to flatter and indulge it, as to ruine both Body and Soul for ever?

IV. One may give a ſhrewd gheſs at the humour of a Man by his Clothes: There is ſome regard therefore to be given to the decency of our Apparel and Dreſs. *A Fool is known by his Coat.* The ancient Sages among the Heathen would not ſuffer a man ſo much as to hold up his finger, without giving a Reaſon for it. Now though I would not be ſo ſtrict, I

could wiſh yet, that men would be a great deal more careful in many caſes than they are. I do not like profuſe Laughter, Scurrility, Looſe Behaviour, Antick Motions and Geſtures, a huddling Gate, nor any thing whatſoever that may give Offence; as, Foul Linen, a greaſie Doublet, an unpleaſant Countenance, waggling the Head, or making Apes Faces, Yawning and looking about, as if one were weary of the Company; nor (in Concluſion) any thing to make them weary of us. Many things may be well enough done, that are not fit to be ſeen.

V. Man was created naked, and he was not aſhamed; for he knew no ſhame in it. But after his Tranſgreſſion, came in his ſhame; he loſt his Innocence, that kept him in Countenance before, and made himſelf Breeches to cover his Nakedneſs. But that which was originally, a Mark of Guilt and Shame, is now become a Badge of Dignity and Honour. Our Garments, now adays, are not ſo much for Covering, as for Ornament, and to entertain the Eyes and Curioſities of others. The Trimming and Dreſs

Dreſs is the index of the Mind. It is a ſcandalous Effiminacy for a man to ſpend his time betwixt the Comb and the Glaſs. If he that's proud or enamour'd of an outſide, did but well conſider what's under it, I am perſwaded, it would take down his ſtomach. He that has Vertue in his Mind, never troubles himſelf about Lace for his Back. Vertue is beſt in her native Beauty, without Arts or Fucuſſes; and ſo glorious in her ſelf, that if ſhe were covered with Jewels, they would but ſerve her for a Foil. It is a miſerable miſtake in men, to beſtow ſo much Coſt and Care upon the Body, and leave the Soul in all manner of Pollution and Uncleanneſs. To ſee men load themſelves with Chains, and becauſe they are of Gold, to glory in them too, without any ſenſe of Infamy or Contempt; as if the Metal made the difference. We are Princes in Golden Fetters, and Slaves in Iron. Some are only ſhackled with Gold, others are riveted and faſtned to it. Their ears are bored, where they carry a whole Patrimony in a Pendent; and that which was in old time a Puniſhment, is now become a piece of Vanity and Ambition. There

is more pains taken about the ordering of a Perruke, than for the Security of the very Head it ſelf. And ſo far has Folly prevailed upon the World, that we ſet the higheſt value upon thoſe things that ought to be our Scorn. I would have my Clothes plain and fit for my Condition; ſuch, as I would be neither proud nor aſham'd of; not for Oſtentation, but Neceſſity. It is not Gold and Pearl that will keep any man from being deformed, who is not clothed with Chriſt's Righteouſneſs. This is the everlaſting Beauty, that ſhines in the Soul, when the Fleſh is Worms-meat. *Who but a Mad-man will be at the Charge to gild a Dunghil?*

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

Of the Guard of the Tongue: How much it concerns us to govern it, and the Difficulty of so doing. Certain Directions what we are to observe in speaking; what to avoid. How to behave our selves in case of Calumny or Slander.

I. THE Tongue has in a manner the Power of Life and Death; and it is of so great moment, the Government of it, that we are to look very narrowly to it. A Tongue without a Guard upon it, is like a City without a Wall. There is no taming of it, without the special Grace of God. Lions, Bulls, Bears, are a thousand times more easie to be reclaim'd. Men are naturally given to be talkative, and presently to communicate their thoughts, as soon as they have conceiv'd them: And then, being so near the Brain, the Fancy conveys it self down, and distills it self into Words immediately. It is not for nothing, that Nature her self thought fit to enclose the Tongue with the double Fence, both of the Teeth and Lips.

Open the Mouth of a Glaſs, and the Spirits evaporate: Open the Mouth of a Man, and ſo does the Vigour of his Mind. He looks but ill to himſelf, that lets his Tongue run at random.

II. We are to conſider before we ſpeak, and not be blurting out, *without fear or wit*, whatſoever comes at our Tongues end. Let a man deliver himſelf candidly and clearly, without any Myſtery or Diſguiſe. God Almighty hath beſtowed the Faculty of Speech upon us, for the Teſtimony and Propagation of the Truth. He that gives Licence to his Tongue, when he is in a Paſſion, will ſpeak that in a moment, that he may repent all his life after: Let him therefore examine himſelf, and forbear till the ſtorm is over. When a mans Mind is at quiet, 'tis an eaſie matter to keep his Tongue ſo too, for there is naturally a fair Correſpondence between them. A ſober and reaſonable Diſcourſe, is an Argument of a ſound, temperate, and well-compoſed frame of Mind. And on the other ſide, the one blaſts the other. *The Value of a man is beſt known by his Diſcourſe.*

III. *Bet-*

III. *Better not to ſpeak at all, than to no purpoſe.* We can make choice of our Meats, why not of our Words too? We can examine what goes into our mouthes, and why not what comes out of them as well? for the latter is more dangerous in a Family, than the other in the ſtomach. He that converſes much with himſelf, and little with other people, is the wiſeſt and the happieſt man; for more have repented themſelves of their ſpeaking, than of their ſilence. Nay, even of Animals, the moſt apprehenſive among them are the leaſt clamorous. Women and Children are the moſt given to Babling. Many vain and unprofitable Words are the certain Indication of a weak and a worthleſs man. If we lov'd God, and ſtudy'd our own Salvation as we ought, our Diſcourſe would be altogether of Him, of Vertue and Perfection. Love can neither diſſemble nor conceal it ſelf, and where we truly love, we can talk of nothing elſe. We are not willing to treat of heavenly things, becauſe our Affections are not yet taken off from the Corruptions of the Fleſh. And then for want of Read-

ing and Meditation, we are at a loſs even for matter, if we had never ſo good a will to the Diſcourſe. *Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth ſpeaketh.*

IV. When Company meets, the better half of the Converſation is commonly ſpent in talking of other Peoples affairs: Where every man has almoſt as many Judges to ſit upon him, as there be Heads in the Town: But not a Creature that looks homeward. We are all of us as blind on that ſide, as we are ſharp-ſighted on the other. In caſes of Reproof and Scandal, our ears are open to every idle Story; but let any thing be ſpoken to the Honour and Vindication of our neighbour, we take no notice of it at all. Detraction is a common Fault, and the commoner, (like an infectious Diſeaſe) the more dangerous. But what have we to do with other peoples Faults, when every man has work enough at home, to mend one? Have a care of blabbing Secrets on any terms: or of committing Secrets raſhly to any body; for it has been many a mans ruine. And whether a man be betrayed by one, or by more, it is the ſame thing. For a word paſſes from

from one to another, till it comes to all at last. This Facility is commonly found among people that are full of Discourse, and that love to hear themselves talk: They are possest with a kind of Drunkenness, and when their Tongues are once going, they can hold nothing, be it never so private and sacred. They interchange their Secrets by turns; first the one, and then the other requires him as a Seal of the Confidence. If the one keeps Counsel, the other tells all perchance to the next man he meets, till every body comes to know that *under the Rose*, which no body seems to know openly. But in the conclusion, it goes on so long in a Whisper, till at length the Secret overflows, and becomes a publick Rumour. There is scarce any Evil under the Sun which the Tongue has not had a share in: We should therefore weigh our Words, and bridle our Mouths, for fear of bolting somewhat that had been better let alone. It is much more commendable to be sparing of our words, than of our money. He that squanders away his Estate, though he does himself hurt, yet others are the better for him; but the Profusion of the Tongue, every

body is the worſe for't. *To hear much, and ſpeak little, is a divine Vertue.*

V. There is not any thing that ſcapes the Laſh of a Licentious Tongue. No, not the Princes of the Earth with all their Power. Not the holy Saints and Martyrs, with all their Sanctity and Innocence. Nay, our bleſſed Savious himſelf, when he was upon Earth, ſuffered under Contumely and Reproach. So that we are not without great Examples, to encourage and excite our Patience. He that behaves himſelf as he ought to do, under the Perſecution of ill Tongues, may reap an advantage from them; for *Detraction is a kind of Provocation to Vertue*, and as good as a Bridle, to keep a man in the right way; and though it be a great Wickedneſs it ſelf, in him that uſes it, there is not yet (in the Conſequence) a greater Enemy to Wickedneſs in another. When any body ſpeaks ill of us, we are to make uſe of it as a Caution, without troubling our ſelves at the Calumny. He that would diſappoint the Malice of a venomous Tongue, let him ſlight it; let him but hold his peace, and it does him no hurt. If my Conſcience tells

tells me that I am Innocent, what do I care who tells the World that I am Guilty? He's in fine caſe, that values himſelf upon other peoples Opinions, and depends upon the Judgment of Fools, for the peace of his life. When any man is ill ſpoken of, let him conſider; If I have not deſerved it, I am never the worſe; if I have, I'll mend. If a Jewel be right, no matter who ſays 'tis a Counterfeit. It is not the decrying and diſcrediting of a Cryſtal Brook, that will turn it into a Puddle: Nay, if you throw dirt into it, you ſhall ſee it clear again preſently. Let us learn Vertue then from the very Fountains and Rivers, and maintain Tranquility of Mind, in deſpight of Cenſure and Oppoſition. It is a womaniſh Weakneſs and Levity, to be ſtartled at every Report. To ſee a Child in the Mothers Arms tearing of her Hair, ſtriking her, pinching her Breaſts, clawing and ſlavering of her Face; there is not any body that will take this for an Affront, becauſe the poor Creature cannot intend it ſo, and knows not what it does. No more ought we to be moved in the caſe of a Calumny, then Parents are at this behaviour of an Infant;

ſant. He that lets himſelf down to be wrought upon by an Injury, does too much honour to his Adverſary: For where it vexes me to be deſpiſed, it would wonderfully pleaſe me to be eſteemed. This is the humour of a narrow Mind; And *no man ſhall ever be happy, whom Contempt can make miſerable.*

CHAP. XII.

Of the Internal Senſes. The uſe of Opinions. The Mind is to be tinctured with good Thoughts. Of Bridling the Senſitive Appetite, and depraved Affections: Divers Precepts to that end.

I. IT is a main point of Wiſdom, not to admit of any Opinion into the Mind, which is not conſonant to Nature or Reaſon: Wherefore we are to ſet our ſelves againſt all the Inordinate Motions of Phanſie, as the Logicians do againſt the Quirks and Fallacies of Sophiſtry. *My Son's dead:* I'm not to blame for't; I could not help it. *My Father has diſinherited me:* And that's the ſame caſe with the

the other. Well! *There's ſomething that I take very ill:* Now this is not well done, for 'tis my own Act, and a thing in my own power to prevent. *Such a man bears his Misfortunes with great Honour:* He does well in't; for it was in his own power, and the thing it ſelf is good. *My Friend is carried away to Priſon:* That's no great matter. *Oh but he has very hard meaſure* (you'll ſay:) correct Opinion, and there's no hurt in that neither. We ſhould deal with the Imagination, as we do with a Madman, keep it in Chains for fear of miſchief. For otherwiſe a wild Beaſt is not ſo ungovernable. It flies out, rambles, extravagates, hunts after Novelties, takes no reſt, and knows no ſuch thing as Moderation. We are to reſtrain and fix it, if we can; for otherwiſe, inſtead of a clear and conſtant Reaſon, all our thoughts and reſolutions are to be ſteered only by Uncertainty and Opinion. *Whatſoever falls not within the Compaſs of the Mind, is beſide our buſineſs.*

II. Whenſoever any thing preſents it ſelf to our thoughts, we are thorowly to examine the matter within our ſelves,

Firſt,

Firſt, as to the nature of the thing, ſimply and in it ſelf abſtracted from all things elſe. And then, as to the Proprieties, the End, Circumſtances, Benefit: How far it may concern us; Whether it be in our Power, or no? without which we are to give it no Admittance; but on the contrary, as much as poſſible, to oppoſe it. Let every man remember, that there is a Searcher of hearts, and take heed of expoſing to Almighty God, thoſe Corruptions in his Soul, which he would bluſh to own to a familiar Friend in an honeſt Converſation. Let our thoughts be peaceful, ſincere, pure, and void of Malice: ſuch (in fine) as if any man ſhould ask us (on the ſudden) what they are, we need not ſcruple to own them. We are not ſo much as to think what we are aſhamed to ſpeak. *The beſt way to keep out wicked thoughts, is to be always employ'd upon good ones.*

III. The greateſt Oppoſite and Enemy to the Reaſonable Soul, is the Brutal and Senſitive Appetite: The Fountain of all Sins and Imperfections, the Adverſary that we are always to fear and ſtruggle

ſtruggle with, till we have brought him (as far as may be in this life) under the Government of Reaſon. This is a Combat that admits neither Quiet nor Truce. We have a reſtleſs Enemy to deal withall, and it muſt be a reſtleſs Conflict. An Enemy that lurks in our own Veins; nay, the one half of us is in a Conſpiracy againſt the other. We are to reſcue our Souls from our Bodies, and to aſſault our ſelves: He that ſubdues his Paſſions, does a greater thing than he that conquers a City. I do not ask an Impoſſibility, and that we ſhould utterly extinguiſh our depraved Affections; let us only learn to govern them: I am not for a Stoical Apathy, but for a Reaſonable and a Chriſtian Moderation. Nature was never guilty of any thing that is vain and ſuperfluous. Take away all Affections, and you take away all Vertue. *where there is no Combat, there can be no Victory.*

IV. This Diſpute, I muſt confeſs, is both difficult and doubtful: For our Paſſions are a great deal older than our Reaſon. They came into the World with us, but our Reaſon follows a long time after

after: And when our Affections have a good while domineered and carry'd our Wills (blindfold, as it were) into all ſorts of ſpecious Miſtakes, under the colour of Good: Then up ſteps Reaſon (in proceſs of time, and fortifi'd by Experience) to claim her right of Authority and Juriſdiction, and to put a check to the Tyranny of our Brutal Appetites. As to the firſt Motions of Nature, there's no preventing, no avoiding of them; but then it concerns us to keep a ſtrict Watch over them, that they do not grow upon us; and if we find them unruly or impetuous, to ſubject them to the Government of Reaſon. We may better ſtruggle with Beginnings than with Habits. If we be but circumſpect, we may eaſily keep our ſelves quiet: For he that fore-caſts what may happen, ſhall never be ſurpriz'd. 'Tis too late to begin to Arm, when the Enemy is in our Quarters. In the multiplicity of our Words and Actions, how much is there that might be ſpar'd! Let us therefore contract our ſelves; the leſs we have to do with the World, the leſs will be our trouble. And it is not for us to ſay, *This or that is a ſmall Buſineſs*; for I tell ye, let it ſeem

ſeem never ſo ſmall, *It is a great advance, the very firſt Step that leads to Vertue and Perfection.*

V. If we may compare to a Tree, the old man in us, that derives his Original from the infected Seed of *Adam*; we may reſemble Self-Love to the Root, a Perverſe Inclination to the Trunk, Perturbations to the Branches; Vitious Habits to the Leaves, Evil Works, Words and Thoughts to the Fruit. Now the way to hinder all ſubſequent Corruptions and Wickedneſs, is to lay the Ax to the Root, and to begin with Self-Love. Take away that, and the whole Off-Spring of Carnal Appetite is deſtroy'd at one Blow. And this is done by Humility and Contempt of our ſelves. We muſt be lowly in our own Eyes, and not fear either the Scorn or the Diſpleaſure of Men: We muſt chearfully ſubmit to what condition ſoever God hath appointed for us: *He that hates himſelf as he ought, ſhall be ſav'd; He that loves himſelf as he ought not, is in danger to periſh.*

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

Of Love, the Nature of it, Cauſes and Effects. Its Remedies; and ſomewhat added of Hatred.

I. LOve is a certain Delight or Satisfaction we take in that which is Good: The firſt Impreſſion that affects the Appetite, proceeding from the Pleaſure we take in a known Good. It is the Cement of the World; the moſt powerful of all our Paſſions; ſubdue this once, and the reſt are eaſily overcome. The Love which is divine, aſpires naturally toward its Original. All Good comes from the Sovereign Good, and thither it tends. Let every man call his own Soul to a Shrift, and ſee what it is that his Heart is moſt ſet upon: For it is either the God which he ſhould worſhip, or the Idol which he ſhould not. It is the Command of God, *that we love him with the whole heart*, and without a Rival. *He that loves any thing elſe, with his whole heart, makes that his God.*

II. Be-

II. Beſide the ordinary Motives to Love, which are Vertue and Beauty, there is alſo a certain Agreement and Congruity of Minds and Manners; together with ſeveral Graces and Advantages both of Body and Mind: As, Modeſty of Behaviour, Induſtry, Nobility, Learning, Sharpneſs of Wit, *&c.* But *the great Attractive of Love, is Love it ſelf*; which, if accompany'd with Benefits, is ſufficient to turn, even the ſtrongeſt Averſion into a Kindneſs. Men of clear Spirits, warm and ſanguine Conſtitutions, mild and gentle Natures, are much given to Love.

III. So great is the Power of Love, that it does in a manner, transform the Lover, into the thing belov'd. It is a kind of a willing Death, a voluntary Separation of the Soul and Body. He that is in Love, is out of himſelf; he thinks not of himſelf, he provides nothing for himſelf, and effectually, he is as good as no where at all, if he be not with the thing he loves: His Mind is in one place, and his Body in another. How miſerable is that man that loves, and loves

loves not God! What Proportion is there betwixt a corruptible Object and the Immortal Soul! The end of ſuch Love is Vanity, and Vexation, and Diſappointment: Whereas he that loves God, lives always where he loves; in him, in whom all things live; and in a ſecure poſſeſſion of an unchangeable Good. In Carnal Love there is a mixture of Bitterneſs and Violence; but the Love of God is altogether humble and calm. The one is full of Jealouſies, the other has none. Here we are afraid of Rivals, and there we pray for them. We are to love God, if we love our ſelves; for we are only the better for it, not He. *Man is changeable and mortal, but there's no loſing of God, unleſs we forſake him.*

IV. If we would have the love we bear to our Neigbour ſincere, it muſt be wholly founded upon Piety and Religion; abſtracted from all the common Conſiderations of Wit, Likeneſs, Good Humour, *&c.* The Platonic Love, which pretends from the ſight of a Corporal Beauty, to raiſe the Soul to the Contemplation of the Divine, proves in the end to be the very Bane of Vertue. It is very rarely

rarely that a man ſtops at the view of a lovely Woman, without a deſire to come nearer; and whether it be a Ray only, or ſome kind of Faſcination with it, that paſſes from the Eye to the Object; ſomewhat there is that diſſolves a man, and ruines him. There's more danger in a ſlip of the Eyes, than of the Feet. The Cure of Love is the more difficult, becauſe the more we oppoſe it, the ſtronger Reſiſtance it makes: And if it be not checkt at the very beginnig, it comes ſo inſenſibly upon us, that we are in before we are aware; but if we begin with it betimes, the Remedy is not difficult. One way of Cure may be by Diverſion, and plunging a mans ſelf into buſineſs, to put the thought of it out of his head: But then we muſt avoid all occaſions and Circumſtances, that may mind us of the Perſon we love. For if we relapſe, there will be no Remedy, but Time and Abſence; and we muſt expect to be perpetually ſeized with it, till in the end it's weary'd out, and falls aſleep. Many have been cur'd out of mere ſhame, to ſee themſelves pointed at, and made Town-talk, and then perhaps, they may have been brought to a better underſtanding of

of the Diſhonour and Hazzard of their Proceeding. Others have relieved themſelves by finding out of Faults and Inconveniences, and by enquiring into the Errours and Imperfections of the thing they love. But the laſt and ſureſt Remedy, is to drive out a Carnal Love with a Spiritual; and to turn our Affections to God, to Vertue, to Heaven, and to Eternity, which are truly amiable. A generous Mind cannot but be aſham'd to ſet his heart upon a Dunghil, *Evil Love corrupts good Manners.*

V. What is it but a kind of Natural Love-Chain, that ties the whole World together, and the ſeveral parts of it? The Stars of the Firmament in their Motions, the Birds of the Air, and the Beaſts of the Field. Now this Sacred Bond is only diſſolv'd by Hatred, which leads to Diviſion and Diſſention, as Love does to Union. The moſt ſubject to this Vice are the Slothful, the Fearful, and the Suſpicious; for they fancy themſelves to be threatned with Miſchief, which way ſoever they look. There are ſome people of ſo unſociable a Nature, that like Birds of ill Omen, they both hate and fear all things

things together. These men are a Burthen to themselves, and to Mankind, and to be avoided by all means, but with Pity, not Hatred. And in truth, there will be no place for Hatred, if we turn every thing to the best; for there is no man so ill, but he has some mixture of Good in him. There is nothing truly detestable, but Sin and Damnation. If we turn our Hatred any other way, the harm is to our selves, and not to the thing we hate. For if we are commanded to love our Enemies, we are likewise implicitely commanded not to hate any body. The Wickedness, I confess (but not the Man) we may and ought to Hate; and it is there only that we can justifie our Hatred. But if a man we must needs hate, let us begin at home, for there it is (even in himself) that every man may find his greatest Enemy.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

Of Deſire and Averſion. What is to be deſired, and what to be declined.

I. HE that ſubmits himſelf to God, that deſires nothing but with Reſignation, that accommodates himſelf to his Condition; that ſays, *whether I be ſick or well, rich or poor, here or elſewhere; Be it, as it pleaſes God, his will be done.* This is a happy man. But when we come once to expoſtulate, and ſay, *When ſhall I go thither? When ſhall I have this or that?* We are in the ready way to be miſerable. For he that covets what's out of his reach, is condemned to a Wheel, ever purſuing what he ſhall never catch. Opinions, Thoughts, Affections, and ſome Actions too, are in our own power; but our Bodies, Riches, Honour, Preferments are not ſo. No man will pretend to forbid or hinder the former; but the latter are liable to Impediments, and hinder the Juriſdiction of another: So that we are either not to deſire them at all, or otherwiſe, to take

take them only during Pleasure, and as transitory Benefits which cannot long continue with us. There is nothing in this World desirable, for *the Figure of it passes away.* Nay, if we had our very Wish, Death will come, and then we must leave all behind us. But within us, is an inexhaustible Fountain of Comfort, if we will but take the pains to dress it, and keep it open.

II. It was the great business and wisdom of some of the Ancient Philosophers, the Government of the Passions; and upon the Consideration of the Powers granted by God unto Man, they came to this Conclusion, that there was *nothing properly to be accounted our own, but our Thoughts and Affections*: And by frequent Meditation upon this matter, they got so absolute a Dominion over the Motions of the Mind, that by virtue of that Command, they did not stick to pronounce themselves (and with some Reason too) the only Rich, Powerful, and Happy men alive: Insomuch, that having exempted themselves from the Empire of Fortune, while their Bodies were even agonising in the Extremity of

Torment, their bleſſed Souls were yet calmly exerciſed upon the Contemplation of Beatitude. But it was by daily Labour and Practice, that they brought themſelves to this ſtate of Indifference, for external things: And he that has gain'd this point, does no more trouble himſelf for the want of any thing which he has not, than becauſe he is not Emperor of *Tartary*, or has not Wings to fly. *Thoſe things that are without us, do not concern us.*

III. This may ſerve to put a check to our Appetites; which if they be not kept within Bounds, will run out into endleſs Extravagancies; and the more we grant them, the more they will crave. What does it ſignifie, to pour Water down the Throat of a man in a Fever? when his Grief is not a Thirſt, but a Diſeaſe. He that ſquares his Deſires to his Reaſon, is upon ſome certainty, but when they laſh out into Vice and Luxury, there is no end of their Importunity. He that contents himſelf within the limits of Nature, ſhall not need to want any thing he would have, but he that exceeds thoſe limits, ſhall be a Beggar even

even in the greateſt Abundance. *A very little ſuffices Nature, but Appetite is inſatiable.*

IV. We ſhould do in our Lives, as we do at a Banquet; when any thing is brought about and preſented us, we are modeſtly to take part: If it paſs by us, to let it go; if it be not yet come to us, to wait with Civility and Patience, till it does come. The like Affection ought we to have for Riches, Honours, and other External things; at leaſt, if we will pretend to the enjoyment of ſuch a Serenity of Mind, as no Accidents ſhall be able to diſcompoſe. We are arrived at a bleſſed ſtate of Tranquillity, if we can but advance thus far: But if we bring our ſelves once to a Neglect and Refuſal of whatſoever the World can pretend to offer us, our work is done, and we are effectually (even upon Earth) in Heaven already. Every mans Happineſs is in his own power, if he will but keep his Deſires within Compaſs. He is the happy man that can have what he will, and that may every man, by confining his Deſires to what he can have.

V. There are many things we dread and abominate, as the greateſt Miſeries and Misfortunes that can befal us, which in the end prove the very contrary. They are Troubleſom, it may be, and go againſt the Hair, but they are inſtructive. Death, Baniſhment, Want, Diſgrace, Labour, Sickneſs, and the like; they are neither Evils in themſelves, nor in our Power, nor are they properly our Concern. They are terrible only in Opinion, and not worthy of our Averſion. *Socrates* (aptly enough) calls them Bug-bears; only Vizours to fright Children, and the whole Buſineſs is but a Maſquerade. Death it ſelf, is it any more than a Bug-bear? How has it been courted (even in the moſt hideous forms) by Multitudes of the bleſſed Saints and Martyrs! Nay by Pagans as well as Chriſtians; by *Socrates*, and divers others of the Heathen Philoſophers! There is not any thing in it ſo formidable, but only conceit and Opinion. It is the Fear of Death, and not the Death it ſelf, that is ſo dreadful; and ſo it fares too in many other caſes. Let us turn all our Fear, and all our Hatred, to the Fear and Hatred of Sin.

CHAP.

CHAP. XV.

Of Joy and Sadneſs. How a good man ought to rejoyce. He that looks before him is not caſt down. Several Antidotes againſt Sorrow.

I. JOY when it paſſes the bounds of Modeſty, draws on a kind of Diſſolution of the Mind. We muſt have a care of that, and ſo to moderate our Chearfulneſs, that if need be, without any Difficulty, we may diſpoſe our ſelves from Mirth to Sadneſs. Our Saviour (who was the beſt Judge of things) ſays not, *Bleſſed are they that laugh*, but *they that mourn*. It were a ſtrange Indecency for a Chriſtian, that profeſſes himſelf a Follower of Eternity, among ſo many perils both of Soul and Body; ſo many juſt grounds of Sadneſs, to ſpend his life in Gigling, and making Fools Faces, and tranſporting himſelf for Trifles. That fugitive earthly Pleaſure and the Joys we talk of, are very many times the near Fore-runners of Sadneſs. *There is no true Joy, but that of a good Conſcience.* He

that cheriſhes, and takes care of the one, ſhall never want the other; for it grows in his own breaſt. All other rejoycing is but Merriment and Frolick without any Subſtance at all, and many a man laughs with a heavy heart. *True Joy is a ſerious matter*; and there muſt be a good Conſcience, honeſt Purpoſes and Actions; a Contempt of Pleaſure, and the peaceful Tenour of an unſpotted Life to maintain it. There can be no perfect Joy without Juſtice, Courage and Temperance. This is the Method of Vertue, firſt to mourn, and then to rejoyce.

II. *Sadneſs is a Perturbation of the Mind, by reaſon of ſome preſent Evil, either real or apprehended:* But we do oftentimes find more trouble in the Opinion of things, than in the things themſelves. Wherefore be not too inquiſitive into the Qualities of things; as concerning Servants, (for the purpoſe) Lands, Moneys, Buſineſs; but rather take into conſideration the Opinion and Eſtimate we have of them. It is not in a mans power to prevent Diſgrace, Robbery, Violence; but to make a right Judgment of theſe things,

things, and to ſatisfie himſelf, that they are not ſimply evil, but often profitable; this is in his power. He that ſuffers under a preſent trouble, let him but turn his thought to a good Conſcience, which is a continual Comfort, and there's his Cure. Nothing can fall amiſs to a good Man: Not that he does not feel it, but he maſters it; and conſiders all Adverſity, only as matter for his Patience to work upon, as the Inſtrument of Divine Grace, and that which opens him a way to eternal Glory. *A good man may be reputed unhappy, bmt he can never be ſo.*

III. It does very much abate the edge of a Misfortune, to fore-ſee it; and to ſay to our ſelves, *whatſoever may be, ſhall be; for he that is prepar'd, can never be ſurpriz'd.* Diſappointments fall heavy upon people that are agog upon Proſperity. What if a man ſhould loſe half his Eſtate? What if all? What if his Houſe ſhould fall? his Corn be all blaſted? his Friends forſake him? What if his Credit ſhould be endanger'd? his Office taken away? his Gown turn'd over his ears? And to all this, let us add Sickneſs, Bondage, Ruine, Fire; It comes to no more,

than what every wiſe man is prepar'd for. There is no Calamity, which he has not thought upon before-hand, and made as eaſie to him by long Meditation, as others make it by long Sufferance. That which happens to any man, may be every man's caſe. Where's the Rich man that can ſecure himſelf from Hunger and Beggery? Where's the Great-man, that may not fall into Diſgrace and Contempt? Where's the Kingdom or Nation that may not be overturned, and utterly unpeopled? *Have not we our ſelves liv'd to ſee the Head of a great and glorious Prince under the Hand of the common Hang-man, and ſtruck off by the Command of his own Subjects?* A moſt execrable Villany, and beyond all Preſident! And theſe prodigious Changes are not the work of much time neither; There's but a moment betwixt Plenty and Beggery; the Court, and the Cottage; a Throne, and a Scaffold. This is the mutable Condition of Humane Affairs; What was another mans Lot to day, may be mine to morrow. *No man bears ill Fortune, better than he that always expects it.*

IV. In

IV. In Prosperity, Vertue has little or no occasion of shewing her self; but in the time of Adversity, her power is manifested in our Patience. *We are become a Spectacle* (saith the Apostle) *to God, Angels and Men.* And it is a Spectacle in which God takes delight, to see a brave Man grappling with ill Fortune, and leading all his Enemies Foreign and Domestick (Passions and Casualties) in Triumph. 'Tis nothing to govern a ship in a smooth Sea, and a gentle Gale. He that is not try'd, lives in Ignorance. *Most unfortunate men*, (we cry) *that ever it should come to this*! But on the other side, *Most fortunate men* (say I) *that have had the benefit of this Experiment*! that we have supported our selves with Honour and Constancy, where others perchance would have shrunk under the Burthen. We are not therefore to yield and render up our selves in Crosses and Disasters; but to make good our Ground, and stand firm upon any Accident that can befal us: For 'tis but breaking of the first Shock, and we shall find the rest to be only Fancy and Opinion. The Works of Nature are found in us alike; but for

Poverty, Diſcredit, Contumely, and what elſe the common People call Evils; ſome there are that bear them with Patience, and others without ſo much as taking the leaſt notice of them: So that it is not the force of any Natural Impreſſion that we labour under, but the Influence of a perverſe Opinion. Why ſhould a man belie himſelf then, and call any Calamity Inſupportable, which he may make eaſie when he pleaſes, only by changing his Opinion of it? Every man is juſt as unhappy as he thinks himſelf, and let him complain of what he will, His *Impatience is the greater Miſchief of the two.*

V. Is there any Sickneſs, or any Pain ſo obſtinate and ſtubborn, but Time will either abate it, or take it away? Now the Queſtion is, Whether we ſhall put an end to it our ſelves, or ſtay till it comes to an end without us? For Time will moſt certainly do that at laſt, which ordinary Prudence might better do at preſent. Nay, if we had never ſo great a mind to entertain and cheriſh Melancholy, it would leave us at length in ſpight of our hearts. Grief, 'tis true, when 'tis freſh, may find Tenderneſs and

and Compaſſion; but as it grows old, it grows ridiculous, and nothing more odious. If a miſerable Wretch were ever the better for ſobbing and lamenting, he ſhould have my conſent to ſpend day and night in Sighs and Groans, beating of his Breaſt, and in all the Outrages that were ever exercis'd by a diſconſolate Creature. But if Howling and Crying be to no purpoſe, let us betake our ſelves to an invincible Reſolution, and ſtruggle with our Calamities. The Pilot deſerves to be thrown over-board, that quits the Helm in a Storm, and ſets the Ship adrift, at the Mercy of the Billows: But he that ſtands to his Tackle, and *bears up againſt foul Weather*, (though he ſinks with the Veſſel) periſhes yet with Honour, and the Comfort of having done his Duty.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVI.

Of Hope and Deſpair: And how we are to moderate both.

I. THat Hope which is not plac'd upon Almighty God, is vain and deceitful, and in effect, but a waking dream. Why ſhould any man torment himſelf with the Expectation of things to come? He that deſires nothing, hopes for nothing, and he that contemns all earthly things, deſires nothing; for *no man can deſire what he deſpiſes.* Nor is it enough for any one to tell me, that the thing he hopes for is eaſily compaſs'd, or that his Hopes never deceived him as yet; for let them be what they will, they carry great Trouble, Uncertainty and Anxiety along with them. A man ſhould no more hanker after, or graſp at things out of his Reach, than leave the plain Way, to wander among Thorns and Precipices: No leſs uneaſie is the one to the Mind, than the other is to the Body. He that lives in Hope, has not one moment of quiet, ſo long as the Will wants the thing it hopes for.

II. We

II. We ſhould never caſt an eye upon any thing, either without us, or about us, but with this Conſideration: *It is all tranſitory and frail.* How ſtrangely do we forget our ſelves! Are we not born Mortal? And this day, nay this very hour, what aſſurance have we of it? Do we not live upon Truſt, and is not Death at the very heel of us? It is by Gods Power and Mercy that we live and have a Being. From him we have received all, and when he calls, to him it is that we are to render all without repining. *He's an ungrateful Debtor, that ſpeaks ill of his Creditor.* There is not any thing under Heaven, that we ought to hope for: And Heaven it ſelf is the only warrantable Subject of our Hope.

III. Deſpair proceeds from a ſluggiſh Abjection of Mind; too great an Apprehenſion of Difficulties; a criminal Diſtruſt of our ſelves, and a Defect both of Reſolution and Induſtry. This weakneſs may be overcome by ſuggeſting Encouragements drawn from the Examples of thoſe that have extricated themſelves out of greater Straits. Let us begin then, and preſs forward; for God will

will assist our Endeavours, and all Difficulties will be made easie to us, so soon as we shall have relinquish'd the false Opinions that have misled us. There is not any thing befals us, but what was alloted us from Eternity, and it is either tolerable or otherwise. If it may be born, we are not to despair, but to endure it: If not, it will make a quick end both of it self, and of us too, and we are not to despair there neither. If we cannot endure it, 'tis short; if we can, 'tis light. It is in our own power, to make many things tolerable, by balancing them with the benefit and convenience that attends them. *Affliction is the occasion of Virtue.*

CHAP.

CHAP. XVII.

Of Fear: The Vanity of it, and how to maſter it. Raſhneſs to be avoided; and ſomething more of Anger.

I. I Have known many people without any viſible, or ſo much as probable danger, run raving up and down, as if they were ſtark mad, upon the bare Apprehenſion of ſome Imaginary Miſchief to befal them. The Torment they endure is unſpeakable; what betwixt the Impreſſion of a preſent, and the Apprehenſion of a miſchief to come. There are many Misfortunes which we create, and have a Being only in the Imagination. There are others which threaten us indeed, but a far off, and they'll come ſoon enough of themſelves, without being drawn on before their time. There are ſome ſo weak, as to govern themſelves by Dreams and idle Phanſies, without any reaſonable ground of Conjecture at all; and to be ſtartled at every fooliſh Rumor. A word miſtaken is enough to break their ſleep; and the

the Apprehenſion of a Great Mans Diſpleaſure, puts them directly out of their Wits; not ſo much for the Diſpleaſure it ſelf, as for the Conſequences of it. But theſe are vain Thoughts, and the vainer, the more Troubleſome. For Truth has its Meaſure and Limits, but Imagination is boundleſs. And the main Difference I find betwixt the Sufferance of a Misfortune, and the Expectation of it, is this: The Grief for what hath befaln us, will over; but the fear of what may befal us, hath no end.

II. He that would deliver himſelf from the Tyranny of Fear, let him take for granted, that what he fears will come to paſs; and then enter into a Computation upon the whole matter. Upon this Deliberation, he will certainly find, that the things he fears are nothing ſo terrible in themſelves, as in the falſe Opinion of them. 'Tis a hard caſe for a man to be baniſhed, or laid in Irons. 'Tis a terrible pain to be burnt alive. And yet we have many inſtances, not only of Chriſtians, but Infidels alſo, that have Deſpiſed and Triumphed over all this; and more indeed, than this amounts to.

to. *Stephen* ſuffered death with a quiet Conſtancy of mind, and pray'd for his Perſecutors. *Laurence* rejoyces upon the Gridiron, and braves the Tyrant. The Virgin *Appollonia*, leaps into the Fire. *Anaxarchus* is chearful in the Morter, under the very ſtroak of the Hammer. *Socrates* takes off his Cup of Poyſon, as if it had been a Frolick, and drinks the Health to *Critias*. What is there now ſo terrible in the Faggot, or the Gibbet, or in the train of Executioners, and Officers of Juſtice that attend it? under this Pomp and Formality, which ſerves only to fright Fools, there lies Death: That, which ſo many thouſands of Men, Women and Children, have not only welcom'd, but Courted. Set aſide the noyſe, the hurry, and the diſguiſe in theſe Caſes; and let every thing appear in its own ſhape, we ſhall find there is nothing terrible in the matter, but the mere Apprehenſion of it: And that it fares with us great Boys, as it does with little ones; our very Nurſes, and our Play-fellows, if they be but dreſt up with a White-ſheet, or a Vizard, are enough to put us out of our Senſes. Nay, and we are the ſillier Children of the two, for we are

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ſtruck with a Panique Terrour, not only at the Counterfeit of a Reality; but the very Counterfeit of a Counterfeit torments us.

III. Bring it now from a particular to a common Cauſe; and let every man ſay to himſelf, I have a frail and mortal Body, liable to diſtempers, ſickneſs, and in the concluſion, to death it ſelf. All this I have known from a Child, and the many ill Accidents that threaten me. What have I now to fear? Bodily ſickneſs? My Soul will be the better for't. Poverty? my Life will be the ſafer, and the ſweeter for't. Loſs of Fortune? why then farewel all the Cares and Dangers that accompany it. Loſs of Credit? If I ſuffer deſervedly, I ſhall deteſt the Cauſe, but apprve the Juſtice: If wrongfully, my Conſcience will be my Comforter. Shall I fear a Repulſe? or a Diſappointment? there never was any man, but wanted ſomething or other that he deſired. Baniſhment? I'll Travel, and Baniſh my ſelf. Loſs of my Eyes? It will deliver me from many Temptations. What if men ſpeak evil of me? It is but what they are us'd to do, and

and what I deſerve. Shall I fear Death? It is the very condition I came into the World upon. Well! But to dye in a ſtrange Country! All Countries are alike, to him that has no abiding-place here. But for a man to dye before his time! As if a man ſhould complain of having his Shackles knock't off, and being diſcharged of a Priſon before his time. We are not to look upon Death or Baniſhment, as cauſes of Mourning, as Puniſhments, but only as Tributes of Mortality. *It is a ſenſeleſs thing to fear, what we cannot ſhun.*

IV. Let us take heed of being over-confident; and venturing at things beyond our ſtrength; for, no man is more liable to miſcarriages, than he that preſumes too much upon himſelf. All our ſufficiency and ſtrength comes from above, and we can do nothing of our ſelves, without Gods aſſiſtance: Our Preſumption ariſes from too high a conceit of our ſelves, too mean a one of our Adverſaries; together with a raſh headineſs of Nature, that underſtands neither Reaſon nor Buſineſs. The wiſe man is cautious, and adventures upon nothing, without

without firſt taking the meaſure of his own Abilities: Whereas he that is overhaſty, and preſumptuous, falls on without any conſideration; and, after the firſt effort, when he finds the difficulty greater than he imagined it, his courage falls and faints: And he comes at laſt, to an acknowledgment of the vanity and unadviſedneſs of his miſtake. *Security is the fore-runner of Calamity.*

V. He that would govern his Anger, muſt begin with a contempt of the pretended Cauſes of it: For it is not the ſuppoſed Injury, but the falſe opinion of it, that does us the miſchief: We provoke, teize and enflame our ſelves, and then caſt the blame upon others. *No man is injur'd, but by himſelf.* We ſhould do well to cokes and flatter our Minds, as Nurſes do their Children, *Be quiet, and thou ſhalt have it*; be not Angry, do not ſtruggle, and make a noiſe, and thou ſhalt ſee, things wil be well enough yet. I would have a man ſet a part ſome certain days, and ſay to himſelf, *I am reſolved, that nothing ſhall make me angry this day, whatever it be.* Let him but proceed then, from a day to a week; from

a week to a moneth and ſo on; he ſhall ſoon grow ſo much the Maſter of himſelf, as to make that his Diverſion, which formerly was his Torment. A gentle and peaceable Humour, is a very agreeable Comfort in Society; but to him that is endued with it, incomparably a greater Bleſſing: For in all Difficulties, it is ſtill chearful, and in all Conflicts victorious.

CHAP. XVIII.

Of the Faculties of the reaſonable Soul. The Underſtanding is not to be employ'd upon Curioſities. What ſtudy is beſt. The evil of medling with other Peoples manners. Not to concern our ſelves for other mens Opinions. Of Self-denial.

I. OUr Underſtanding was given us by Almighty God, to the end that we might know him, and love him: But ſin has given it two wounds, Ignorance and Blindneſs; for we are at a loſs, firſt, in the knowledge of Truth; and then, in the knowledge of Good and Evil. We are therefore (in this ſtate of danger) to take at leaſt as much care, what we

we admit into the Understanding, upon the Recommendation of the Senses; as whom we receive into a Town, in time of a close Siege, or a raging Pestilence. The Senses make the Tender, and the Understanding takes, and whatsoever the Judgment allows, is propounded to the Will. But the Sense presents both Good and Evil; and it belongs to the Mind, either to entertain, or refuse.

II. We are in the first place, to keep the Understanding from amusing it self upon vain Subtilties, and Curiosities: It was given us for Divinity, and substantial Wisdom; and it is our part to Husband it, and not squander away so excellent a gift upon Trifles. He that ventures upon an unknown Herb, to learn the Temper and Qualities of it, if it prove a strong Poyson, his Life is hazarded in the very scrutiny, without attaining his end: Such is the case of those that will be prying into impertinent and abstruse Curiosities; they are lost beyond recovery, even before they so much as know what they would be at. *To know that which a man is never the better for, is next door to down right Ignorance.* He that would

would be truly wiſe, does not ſtudy to get a Name, but to order his Life; and how to relieve his Mind, rather than how to delight it. What is any man the better for knowing the Influences of the Stars, if he be ſtill a ſtranger to his own Infirmities? for all the Flowers and Excellencies of Elocution, if he has not yet learned to hold his Tongue? Let him that delights in Novelty, renew himſelf: That takes upon him to refute other mens Errours, begin with his own. Let him that delights in Hiſtory, to ſee what other People have done, conſider in the firſt place, what he is to do himſelf. Let him that makes it his buſines to compound differences among his Neighbours, not forget to pacifie his own Tumultuary Paſſions. We ſpend ſo much time upon Superfluities, that we have none left for things neceſſary. *That's the neceſſary knowledge, that makes us rather Good, than Learned.*

III. To what end is it, that we puzzle and perplex our ſelves about Controverſies, which, for the moſt part, would be more for our Credit, to contemn than to reſolve. It is the better half of our ſtudy,

dy to learn thoſe things, which we are, in honour, to forget, as ſoon as we have them. But there is an Intemperance of Knowledge, as well as of other things. There is no end of Books: Our Libraries are furniſh'd for Sight and Oſtentation, rather than for Uſe. The very Indexes are not to be read over in an Age.. And in this multitude, how great a part of them are either dangerous, or not worth the reading? It may be well enough to take a taſte of many; but when that's done, we are to ſet up our reſt upon a few. It is not ſo much from Books, as from Practice and Examples that we are to expect the Improvement of the Mind.

IV. *Oh the Vanity of Mortals!* to ſpend our Lives and our Spirits, upon Humane Arts and Sciences, (as if we were never to die) without any regard at all to the thought of a Life everlaſting, which is not to be acquired by profound Learning, but by Probity of Manners, and Simplicity of Vertue. What are we the better for the Voluminous Hiſtory of the World, even if we had it all without Book? for the Records of all the Tyrannies

rannies and Rebellions that ever paſt from the Creation of the Univerſe, to this Inſtant? How much better were it to check the growth of our own Iniquities, than to tranſmit the ſtory of other Peoples. Geometry teaches us to meaſure our Lands; but why do we not firſt learn to meaſure our Neceſſities? Arithmetick teaches us to count what we have got, but why do we not rather learn to contemn it, and chearfully to part with that, which with ſo much carking and caring we have ſcrap'd together? Muſick ſhews us how to make up a Harmony of ſeveral Voices; but it were much more for our benefit, to learn the Art of Reconciling our Senſe and Reaſon: Nor is the Skill of Flats and Sharps near ſo much to our purpoſe, as the Science of moderating the Affections; ſo as neither to be puft up with Proſperity, nor dejected in Adverſity. Not that I diſlike the knowledge of theſe things; for I eſteem them to be very Laudable Accompliſhments: But in the ſecond place, and after we have ſtudied our ſelves, and what more concerns us. *He that knows every thing but himſelf, knows in effect as much as comes to nothing.*

V. It is a ſordid and infamous humour, to be prying into, and medling with other Peoples matters; to be obſerving and deſcanting, upon Lives and Manners; and to make the worſt of every thing. What have I to do with the Servant of another, who is to ſtand and fall to his own Maſter? *The great Judge of the World, has reſerv'd Judgment to himſelf; and he that preſumes to Judge his Neighbour, invades the Throne of the Almighty:* Let every man enter into the Privacies of his own Conſcience, and ſee what Good is wanting in him, what Ill abounds; and he'll find work enough at home, to employ his Pragmatical Spleen upon, without hunting after the faults of others. And there's no Protection neither, againſt the Sting of a Malevolent Wit, and a Licentious Tongue. Was not our Saviour himſelf, taunted and traduced by the Jews? And is not the Holy Goſpel daily perverted by Hereticks? It is with diſtemper'd minds, as with Melancholick Bodies; whatſoever they take turns to Corruption. The Action is moſt commonly qualified by the Intention; and Good or Bad accordingly: But *this*

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is only known to him that ſearcheth the heart and the reins. But let the Action we Cenſure be never ſo Foul, and the Perſon never ſo Guilty; what is it yet to us? How Un-Chriſtian an Indecency is it, to expoſe the Nakedneſs of our Brother for a publick Spectacle? why do we not rather obſerve our ſelves? Judge and condemn our ſelves? and turn the point of our Malice, upon our own Hearts? *He that's a ſevere Judg to himſelf, ſhall eſcape the Judgment of the moſt High God.*

VI. They that are ſo quick-ſighted, to diſcover other Peoples failings (out of a deſire to be thought ſhrewd men) are commonly as jealous of being *paid in their own Coyn*; and of being Hated, Contemned, ill thought of, and ill ſpoken of by others. Toward the ſubduing of this Vice, we are firſt to Moderate the Pleaſure we take in the Acclamations and Applauſes of the Multitude, and then utterly to caſt away all curioſity of knowing what the World thinks or ſays of us; for we are many times poſſeſt with a ſuſpicion, that ſuch or ſuch a man talks ſlightly, and has a mean opinion of us, who is ſo far from ſpeaking

amiſs, that he ſays nothing at all of us, nor has us ſo much as in his thought. Let a man ſay with the Apoſtle, *If I pleaſed men, I were not the ſervant of Chriſt. 'Tis little to me that I am judged by you*, &c. Such as we are with God, ſuch we truly are; and neither the better nor the worſe for the Opinion or Diſcourſe of Men. *'Tis much better to be good, than to be ſo eſteemed.*

VII. If we would have nothing fall out contrary to our Will, we muſt abſolutely lay it down, and Will nothing at all, but in ſubmiſſion to the Will of God. This is the way that leads to a true Tranquillity of mind, and to a laſting peace. He that wiſhes for nothing but what he ſhould, may live as he would. It is the only Felicity of this Life, to ſquare our Wills to the Will of God. He who from all Eternity has appointed the end, has likewiſe appointed the means; and whether the way be ſmooth or craggy, through Proſperity, or Adverſity, it is ſtill what God has allotted us, in order to our Eternal Bliſs. He that obeys Divine Providence, and follows it chearfully, does well and wiſely: For

For let him lag and hang off never ſo much, he'll be forced to follow in ſpight of his Teeth. (Beſide the Impiety of his Diſobedience.) *God Almighty leads the willing, and draws the unwilling.*

CHAP. XIX.

Of the State of Proficients. Divers Helps to Improvement. The value and the uſe of time. God is always preſent.

I. IT is a good ſtep toward Vertue, for a man to be Conſcious of his own Iniquities, and to deſire to mend: Without which, we go backward every day, from bad to worſe. When we are once in the way, we muſt go on as we began; and the more haſte we make, the ſooner ſhall we enjoy the Serenity of Mind which we aim at. *It is a good ſign, when a man comes to ſee his failings better than he did*: As it is in a Patient, when he comes to be ſenſible that he is ſick. Every man is apt to flatter himſelf, and therefore let us have a care of being over-credulous. If, upon the ſifting and examining of our Hearts and Thoughts, we

find an Abatement of our Luſts, a greater firmneſs of mind than ordinary, and a more abſolute command of our ſelves, we are in a fair way of Proficiency and Emprovement. It is an ineſtimable Bleſſing, for a man to be Maſter of himſelf, and to be at Unity with himſelf. *A good man is unchangeably the ſame. A wicked man is perpetually at variance with himſelf.*

II. It is but one-days work to arrive at the higheſt pitch of Holineſs, if we would but turn with our whole hearts, from the Creature, to the Creator. Now whether our Converſion be ſincere, or no, we ſhall know by theſe marks: If we be out of love with Vanities, and tranſitory things: If we delight in Solitude, and Contemplation: If that pleaſe us beſt, that is perfecteſt: If we prefer a good Conſcience to God-ward, before an empty Reputation among men. If we do all this, it goes well with us: But *the moſt powerful inducement to Vertue of all the reſt, is the daily Meditation of the Life and Paſſion of Chriſt.* That Story is the Book of life; and ſufficient to bring us to Heaven, if all the Libraries in the World,

World, Authors and all, were utterly deſtroyed. But it is not yet enough, barely to know Chriſt, and meditate of him, unleſs we likewiſe imitate him, and lead our lives in a Conformity to his word and example. The way to rectifie that which is crooked, is to bring it to the Rule.

III. It was well ſaid of ſome-body, That good order is as neceſſary to the Mind, for the gaining of Vertue, as it is to the Body for the recovery of Health; for there are a thouſand things in the way elſe, to divert and retard us. As, the inordinate love, either of our ſelves, or of any thing elſe: Impatience in Loſſes; the over-much indulging of our ſelves, in our Appetites and Pleaſures, whether in Meat and Drink, Converſation, or the like; the plunging of our ſelves over head and ears in the affairs of this World, and being too much wedded to our own Opinions; rejecting the motions and inſpirations of the good Spirit within us. Theſe obſtacles muſt be removed, and we are to encounter them, with Reſolution and Vigour; we are to proceed with Readineſs, Alacrity, and a

good Intention, and with an induſtry anſwerable to the excellency of the work in hand. It is not the number of our Exerciſes, but the thorow doing of them; not ſo much the thing it ſelf, as the manner of doing it, that avails us.

IV. Our days are upon the wing; Time flies away, and there is no recalling of what's paſt: Our life depends upon the Future, and is ſtill looking forward; and we conſume it in mere Preparation, till Old Age and Death it ſelf over-take us, unprovided for it. It is in our Lives as upon the way, in good Company. The time paſſes away in Chat and Diſcourſe, and we are at the end of our Journey before we are aware. For, ſleeping or waking, we ſtill keep on our pace, and paſs inſenſibly to our laſt end, even before we think on't; What is it then that we trifle for? why do we linger and dally? Time muſt be lay'd hold on immediately, or it is gone for ever. The value of a day, nay, of an hour, is ineſtimable, and the loſs of it irreparable. If a man comes to enter upon our Eſtates, or there falls out any diſpute about a Land-mark we muſt preſently to

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Law and Arms. But our time and our life, is open for any man to take that pleaſes; ſo Prodigal are we in the only caſe where we may be honeſtly covetous. We are not to compute Life by the number of Years, but by the well employing of them; and let the oldeſt man alive diſcount for the time he has ſpent in Sleep, Luxury, Quarrels, Viſits, Lazy ſauntrings up and down; in doing juſt nothing at all, or at beſt, nothing to the purpoſe, without ſo much as minding what he did, and he ſhall find, that at the end of a hundred years, he dyes a Child. We are apt enough to lament the loſs of our Time-paſt, and yet we loſe more ſtill in the Lamentation: Why do we not rather improve the preſent, while we have it, to prevent a late Repentance? why do we loſe this inſtant, which is our own, and pretend to diſpoſe of the Future, which is out of our power? In effect, Life is but a moment, and delay is abſolute loſs. *He that puts off to day, comes too late to morrow.*

V. It is to Almighty God, that we are to direct all our Thoughts, Words and Deeds; to the excluſion of any other

Object, applying our ſelves wholly to his bleſſed will. *He that takes God for his Guide, ſhall be ſure never to miſs his way:* Nor ſhall he miſcarry in any of his affairs, who directs all to Gods glory; and lives, as in his holy preſence: Neither is it poſſible for any man to avoid his All-ſeeing eye, which reaches not only to our Words and Actions, but pries into the Thoughts of our Hearts. And He's in a great miſtake, that when the Door is bolted, and the Curtains drawn, reckons himſelf to be alone; for there is no place ſo dark, or ſo retired, as to exclude the Omni-preſence of God, *in whom we Live, Move, and have our Being:* Whether we Eat or Drink, Walk, or Diſcourſe, our thoughts are to be always upon him; we are to do our utmoſt, to render our ſelves worthy of the favour of his Countenance, and not to do thoſe things in the ſight of an All-ſeeing God, which even before a Temporal Judge, we would be aſhamed of. Every man ſhould live, as if there were only God and himſelf in the World; and chearfully imbrace the lot which Providence hath ſet out for him, whether Proſperity or Adverſity. We are to ſeek God,

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and whether we find him by this or that way, it matters not, provided that we find him at laſt.

CHAP. XX.

Of the good of Solitude. Ill Company to be avoided. The Vices of the World, and what they are. Vertue, the ſtudy of a Proficient. How to know when we have attained it.

I. IT is a great Argument, of a clear and well compoſed Mind, when a man is at Unity with himſelf; for he approaches in ſome degree, to the Felicity of God himſelf, who, in himſelf is bleſſed for evermore. Neither can he be ſaid properly ever to be alone, that is never ſeparated from Chriſt. If ſo it be, that we cannot hold our Tongues, we may talk to our ſelves, but let us be ſure then that we talk to honeſt men. If you would know now, what a man ſhould ſay to himſelf; why truly, the ſame things that he is uſed to ſay to others of his Neighbours. Let him ſpeak ill of himſelf, to himſelf; let him call himſelf to-

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an account for all his ſins, and puniſh himſelf for whatſoever he finds amiſs, and he'll never want matter to work upon. Let him retire and give himſelf leiſure for Contemplation; but let him then conceal his very Retirement. He that makes Proclamation of his Solitude, retires only to be more publick, which is a kind of ſloathful Ambition. Now there muſt be a Retirement of the Mind too, as well as of the Body, to make it Beneficial and Comfortable. We muſt withdraw our ſelves from all vain Employments, and not only from Company, but from all things too which do not concern us; we muſt not admit ſo much as any Creature, no nor the very Image or Idea of any creature, into our thoughts, we muſt blot out of our minds, all the toys and fooleries of this World, and in the moſt ſecret receſs of ous Souls, addreſs our ſelves to God alone. In this Privacy of mind, in this Oblivion of all Idle and Impertinent things, we ſhall gain peace of Heart, true Tranquillity and Repoſe. Let this be our retreat then, and this our buſineſs: For we ſhall certainly find God there, where the Creature is abandon'd.

II. It

II. It is rarely ſeen, that any man is good himſelf who keeps ill Company: For there is nothing ſo deſtructive of good Manners, as to Herd with the Multitude, who do commonly leave a man worſe than they found him. It is not for a tender and unſettled mind, to reſiſt the force of *ill examples*, that break in upon a man, with a kind of Authority and Credit; for men are apt to run over to the ſtronger ſide. The man of the *Guſto*, gains upon us by degrees, and takes us by the Palate. A rich Neighbour ſtrikes us with Envy, or Avarice, and many a man has been undone by an ill example. Our very Parents, our Companions, our Servants, draw us ſome way or other into miſchiefs. The whole World is full of ſnares and hazzards, and we are no ſooner out of our Mothers belly, but we are encompaſt with dangers, as if we were dropt into the Quarters of an Enemy. There is not any man living hardly, that does not either recommend ſome Wickedneſs to us, or imprint it upon us, or at leaſt infect us with ſome evil diſpoſition, before we are aware. O the delicious ſweetneſs of thoſe bleſſed hours, that a man

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ſpends in his Private Family or Study; apart, from the noiſe and buſineſs of the People! How calm! How gentle! not ſo much as a Cloud, or a Breath of Wind, to diſturb the Serenity of his Mind. But, by and by, ſome body calls him out; away he goes, gets more Company, makes up a Club, and never fails of falling into ſome exceſs or other, and returning worſe than he went out. This is the Fruit of Publick Converſation; but we are not ſenſible of the damage we receive in Company, till we come afterward to reflect upon it in Solitude. Let us make what haſte we can then into our ſelves, before we are overcome with the Contagion of the Vicious Multitude. *The Mind that is moſt contracted, is moſt chearful.*

III. Let a man but imagine himſelf upon the top of an high Mountain, and there taking a proſpect of the miſerable World, he ſhall quickly ſee enough to put him out of love with it, and all that's in it. Nothing but Robberies at Land, Pyracies at Sea, the Tumults and Horrors of War, Humane blood ſpilt like water; Sin and Iniquity broken looſe, and

and beating down all before it; Look into the Cabinets of great men, and you ſhall there ſee ſuch ſpectacles of Brutal Luſt, as cannot but diſguſt and nauſeate the very Actors themſelves; and every where elſe, ſo boundleſs a Licenſe and Diſorder, that we would almoſt ſwear the whole world were a *Bedlam*(But the madmen are too many for the ſober, and their Number is their Juſtification. The Laws themſelves are turn'd into ſnares, and Innocency is there invaded, where it ought to be protected. The Not-guilty is in more danger, than the Guilty: and the Judge more criminal, than the Priſoner: For *where there is money, there can be no tranſgreſſion.* A pack of Calumniating Knaves in one place; a troop of Fawning Paraſites, in another; here Feuds, there Flatteries; one man wallowing in his Wine, another ſtretching himſelf upon his Bed. Inſatiable Avarice on the one ſide; Slaviſh Ambition on the other. In all Publick Aſſemblies, more Vices than Men: Sins of irreverence toward God, Injuſtice toward our Neighbour, and Abuſe of the Creature: So that being guilty of all ſins, they are to expect that all ſins will riſe in judgement

ment againſt them. One would think, that this view of the World, might be ſufficient of it ſelf, to take off any mans heart from the love of it: But when a man conſiders the difficulty of maſtering ſo many Temptations, and bearing up againſt ſo many ill and powerful Examples, certainly he cannot chuſe but bethink himſelf of a Retreat. It is a hard matter, for a man to love Innocence, where Wickedneſs is in Authority and Credit: If it does not abſolutely corrupt us, it will yet puzzle and hinder us. The only way to be ſafe and quiet, is to retire into our ſelves, where we may look upon the World, without being endanger'd by it. He that has renounced external things, and withdrawn into himſelf, is Invincible; the World is to him, as a Priſon; and Solitude, a Paradiſe.

IV. But we are never the better for quitting the World, if we do not vigorouſly apply our ſelves to the ſtudy and practice of Vertue; without which we can have no Comfort, no Repoſe; and having that, we can want nothing. There are three things that ſeem to have a fair

Analogy,

Analogy, one with the other, in all things, and above all things, is God himſef: Among Senſibles, is Light, and among the perfections of the Mind, is Vertue. God is the Light, and Vertue of all things: Light is the Vertue of the World, and the Image of God: Vertue is the Light of the Mind, by which we are called, and become the Children of God. Without a pure mind, there is no attaining of this Perfection; for Vertue is the Perfection of a man, that repairs all our failings, and fills us with delight; ſhe raiſes up our fleſhly Nature, in things ſpiritual. She is the Rule of Life, a light to the Blind: She beats down ſin, and brings us to Eternal Life. In the ſtudy of Vertue, we are to learn what it is (in the firſt place) both in general and in particular: *For no man ſeeks he knows not what.* We are then to keep our ſelves in the continual practice of it: Like Souldiers that will be ſtill exerciſing and skirmiſhing, even in time of Peace, and without an Enemy: Very well underſtanding, that theſe Encounters, though but repreſented, and in jeſt, keep them in breath and readineſs for Aſſaults in earneſt. Let a man ſuppoſe him-

himſelf under all the Oppreſſion and Indignity imaginable; *ſtript to his ſhirt, and thrown upon a Dung-hill*, and let him then make tryal of his Patience, as if this were his very caſe indeed. He that exerciſes himſelf before the Battel, will be more reſolute in it: *He that has often loſt Blood, goes chearfully to the Combat.*

V. The Habits of Vertues, are the or k of Time: And we ſhall know when we are poſſeſt ot any of them, by theſe Tokens. We have made a good Progreſs toward any Vertue, when we have extinguiſh'd, or at leaſt in a large meaſure, ſuppreſt the contrary Vice; when we have brought all our Paſſions, to a ſubmiſſion and obedience unto Reaſon; when the practice of Vertue, is become not only eaſie, but delighful to us; when in contempt of Temporizers, we ſtand up with a generous Freedom, in the Vindication of Vertue, againſt all oppoſers; when we come once naturally to abominate thoſe things, which formerly we doted upon, with a depraved Inclination; when the love of Vertue is grown ſo habitual to us, that we allow our ſelves in nothing

nothing that is ill, no, not ſo much as in a dream; when we come to imitate what we approve in others, and to abſtain from what we reprehend; when nothing that is amiſs ſeems little to us, but worthy of our greateſt care and diligence to avoid; when we can ſee our Equals preferred, without Envy; when we have the honeſty to confeſs our faults, and ſubmit them to correction and reproof; when we can content our ſelves in the Teſtimony of a good Conſcience, without making publication of our good Works. (Which in the very doing, are their own reward,) when the whole buſineſs of our life is Vertue, which is always in Act, and never tir'd.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXI.

Of Theological Vertues. Faith is to be manifested in our works. In God alone we are to put our trust. Motives to the Love of God. The Love of our Neighbours shews it self in good Offices. An Exhortation to Charity.

I. *FAith is the Basis of all other Vertues, and the Foundation of Christian Life; without which, no man can please God.* This is the Wisdom that has subdued the World, to which we are firmly to adhere, without any unnecessary curiosity or Disquisition. But we are to do, as well as believe; for *Faith without works is dead.* Now while we are Christians in Profession and Discourse, let us have a care, not to be Infidels in our Lives and Manners. If we believe the Gospel, why do we not obey it? If we do believe an Eternity, why do we prefer a momentary Life and Pleasure before it? What are we the better for believing that which is True and Good, if in our Actions we be false and Wicked?

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A good Faith, and an ill Life will hardly ſtand together: *For he that believes aright, will practiſe what he believes.*

II. Since moſt certain it is, that all things are ordered and governed by an Over-ruling Providence, inſomuch, that not a Bird of the Air, nor the Leaf of a Tree, falls to the ground without it: This methinks ſhould give us Courage and Confidence in all Extremities; and a full Aſſurance that our Heavenly Father will never fail us at a time of need. Let us therefore caſt our ſelves wholly upon the Mercy and Good-pleaſure of Almighty God; and not depend upon the help and counſels of man, which are deceitful and uncertain. What if matters go croſs, and beſide our expectation, ſo as to unſettle the whole courſe of our Thoughts and Affairs? What if we ſhould be viſited with Sickneſs, threatned with falſe Accuſation; perhaps worſe Accidents? Our truſt is in God, our dependence upon him: And who knows but the Divine Wiſdom has made choice of theſe Afflictions, as the means to bring us to Eternal Glory? The Afflictions of this Life, are as nothing to him,

him, that has his heart fixed upon the bleſſings of a better: Whatſoever a man hopes for, he may compaſs, and reckon himſelf as poſſeſt of what he believes.

III. Charity is the Miſtreſs of all Vertues, and is directed either to God, or to our Neighbour. To God in the firſt place; whom we are to love with all our heart, with all our ſoul, and with all our ſtrength; (merely for himſelf, and for his infinite Goodneſs) above all things that are amiable: For, it is to his Grace and Mercy, that we are indebted, for our Being, Life, Motion, Senſe and Underſtanding. He it is, that hath delivered us from the bondage of Satan, dignified our Souls with infinite Priviledges, and prepared Eternal Life for us, of his own free Goodneſs, without any antecedent Merit. The Heaven, the Earth, the Air, the Water, and the whole Univerſe, call to us aloud, to love and ſerve that God, who has made all theſe things for our ſervice. If the good of the Soul be the thing we look for, what need we go further than to God himſelf? who is the only, and the Sovereign good, great and deſirable beyond imagination.

gination. It is only by Love (though in a vaſt diſproportion) that we can acquit our ſelves to the Almighty, in kind. Love is Active, not Idle: It does not ſeek its own: It ſurmounts all difficulties; and, *He that loves truly, may dye, but cannot be overcome.*

IV. *Nature has implanted in all reaſonable Creatures, a love of Society,* which ought to work more really in Chriſtians, who are called to the ſame Faith and Glory, and are Members of the ſame Body. No man can love God, that does not love his Neighbour. Now this Love to our Neighbour, is exerciſed, in conferring of Benefits, doing all ſorts of good Offices, and going before others in Humility and Kindneſs. The grace and value of a Bounty, lyes much in the chearful, and the ſpeedy applying of it: For there muſt be no ſtop, but in the modeſty of the Receiver; there needs no more to the relief of a neceſſitous perſon, than that we know his wants: For, it breaks the heart of a Generous man, to be put to beg it; and the Favour is ten times as great, when it prevents the asking of it. It is rather a pur-

purchaſe than a gift, when a man receives a Benefit upon a Requeſt. He that gives a Prayer, or a Bluſh, for a good-turn, pays dear for't. In caſes, where we could not fore-ſee, or prevent a ſuit, we are however to ſhew, that we would have done it, if we could, by our manner of granting it; which ought to be ſpeedy and chearful. There muſt be good words, as well as good deeds: It muſt be done frankly, and without either Vanity or Reproach. It is a great kindneſs to put a Petitioner quickly out of his pain, by ſtopping his mouth, and doing his buſineſs, ſo ſoon as ever we know it. And then, *we are not to blow a Trumpet, when we give an Alms.* The thing will ſpeak it ſelf; and *he that ſees in ſecret, will reward us openly.*

V. Among the Acts of Chriſtian Charity, there is not any thing more acceptable to God, nor any more effectual proof of our Faith, than that compaſſion to the poor, which we exerciſe in giving of Alms. Let us therefore have a care of deſpiſing the poor; who, though neceſſitous themſelves, have it yet in their power to make us rich. It is a kind of

of redeeming our ſelves with our money; and turning an inſtrument of Avarice, into an occaſion of Mercy: Shall we give more for a place in a Play-houſe, than for a place in Paradiſe. We pay Duties and Taxes to Temporal Princes, let there be never ſo great a Dearth; And can we not afford, out of our Abundance, a morſel of Bread to the King of Heaven, in his poor Members? He that is cloſe-handed to the needy in his Diſtreſs, is guilty of his Brother's Blood. He that does not feed him, murthers him. Our thoughts are ſo much taken up with providing for our Heirs, that we never ſo much as think what ſhall become of our Selves; But we had better abate a little of their Patrimony, than to hazzard the main of our own Salvation. But let us come to a Reckoning, and ſee what are our poſſeſſions in this World? What do we pretend to in the Next? In Death we have nothing left us, but what we have ſent to Heaven beforehand, by the hands of the Needy. Men of little Faith! There's our Treaſure. A Thief may pick a Lock, and break open our Coffers here below, but Heaven is impregnable.

CHAP. XXII.

Of Prudence. The Neceſſity and the Difficulty of it. The duty of a wiſe man.

I. AS a Workman is nothing without his Line and Level; ſo, neither are We, without Prudence. It is the eye of the Soul, the art of life, the guide of all our Actions, and the Rule of other Vertues: There is no living comfortably without it; but exceedingly difficult it is, and obſcure. It is difficult: Firſt, in regard of the Comprehenſion of it; for, it takes cognizance of the whole Univerſe, in it ſelf, and in every part of it. Secondly, In reſpect of the Uncertainty of Humane Affairs; which, by reaſon of infinite Variations and Accidents, and their dependencies upon divers circumſtances, are hardly reducible to a Rule: Nay, there are many times ſuch contrarieties and diſagreements, as are almoſt impoſſible to be reconciled. The Obſcurity lyes in this, that we ſee only the Appearances of things, when the Springs and Cauſes that

that move them, are in the Dark: We ſee only the top of the Building, but the Foundation is out of ſight: Beſide, that the good or bad event of things, is concealed in the Unſearchable Decree of the Almighty; ſo that there are very few men wiſe enough, to make the beſt of their buſineſs.

II. Wiſdom is the Product of Experience and Memory. The one teaches us, what is beſt to be done; and the other minds us when we are to do it. He that commits himſelf to general experiences, and does not venture out of his depth, is ſafe. To do wiſely, a man ſhould firſt take a meaſure of himſelf; and next, of the matter he takes in hand, for fear of over-valuing his own ſtrength. One man is undone by preſuming too much upon his Eloquence. Another runs himſelf out of his Fortune; for want of proportioning his Expence to his Eſtate! A third, kills himſelf with laying more upon an infirm Body, than it is able to bear: Wherefore we are to compare our Force, with our Undertaking; and to have a care of Burthens, that are too heavy for our ſhoulders. We ſhould not meddle with any thing nei-

their, bnt what we may hope to go thorow withal. The next thing is the choice of our Companions; for, we had need have a very good opinion of thoſe people, with whom we propound to divide our Lives: And to look narrowly into their Converſation, that we be not ruin'd for our good will. We are (in Concluſion) to examine our ſelves how we ſtand inclin'd to the thing in Queſtion; for, *'Tis loſt labour, to go about to force Nature.*

III. It is a hard matter for a man in Paſſion, to diſtinguiſh Truth and Honeſty from Errour and Deluſion; ſo that it is a point of Prudence, not to enter upon any conſiderable Action, in a Diſtemper of mind: For there is no greater Enemy to Wiſdom, than Precipitation, which brings many a man to deſtruction, beyond recovery: Wherefore nothing is to be done Headily, or without good adviſe. *Men are naturally unſtable, and irreſolute: Providences uncertain; Events dubious: and Experience it ſelf proves many times deceitful. In the multitude of Counſellors, there is ſafety.* There are many eaſie people that judge of things

things by the Gloſs and Out-ſide only; and ſo fall into great miſtakes: But the wiſe man paſſes a ſtrict enquiry into the things themſelves, abſtracted from all Artifice and Impoſture; into the Qualities, and not only into the Names of things. For, what is Money, Reputation, Title, but a ſuperficial Verniſh to dazle Children and Fools? We are to place our ſelves, as upon a Watch-Tower, where we may diſcover all Accidents afar off, without danger of being ſurpriz'd, and crying out with the ſenſeleſs Multitude; *Who would have thought it*! We are likewiſe to proceed with deliberation, maturity of judgment, and diligent examination of things; for fear of ill Circumſtances: For there is ſo near a reſemblance betwixt Vice and Vertue, that we may very well miſtake the one for the other; and entertain that for Wiſdom, which is nothing in the world but Craft and Cunning. When we have once made our Election, we are without delay, to put our purpoſe in execution: For, *good counſel, without Execution, is of no effect.*

CHAP. XXIII.

Of Juſtice and Religion; The Acts of both. Repentance, and wherein it conſiſts.

1. JUſtice is a Glorious and a Communicative Vertue; ordained for the Common-good of Mankind, without any regard to it ſelf. This is it that keeps men from worrying one another, and preſerves the World in peace. It is the Bond of Humane Scoiety, a kind of Tacit Agreement, and Impreſſion of Nature; without which there is not any thing we do, that can deſerve commendation. The juſt man *wrongs no body, but contents himſelf with his own; Does good to all; Thinks and ſpeaks well of all: Gives every man his due, and is not any mans hindrance.* Where he is in Authority, *he commands righteous things; lies open to all; prefers a publick good, before a pivate; puniſhes the wicked, rewards the Good, and keeps every man in his duty.* Where he is in ſubjection, *he preſerves concord, lives in obedience to Laws and Magiſtrates; contents himſelf in his ſtation, without hankering*

ing after Offices and Preferment; and is no medler in other peoples matters. He is juſt for Juſtice-ſake, and asks no other reward than what he receives in the comfort of being juſt.

II. Religion is the moſt excellent of Moral Vertues; and is excerciſed immediately upon the Honour and Worſhip of God: Of which this is the firſt point, to know and believe him; and then to adore him for his Majeſtie and Goodneſs. Barely to know God, is not ſufficient; for, the Devils themſelves do as much that hate him: There muſt be Love and Adoration, as well as Knowledg. I wiſh we did but diſcharge our duty, as well as we underſtand it. There's none of us, but acknowledges Gods Providence in the ordering and governing of the World; his Omnipotency, Glory, and Goodneſs, and from his Mercy it is, that we hope for Eternal Happineſs. Why do we not pay him that Veneration then, which belongs to him? but prefer a little pitiful dirt before him? Religion lies not ſo much in the Underſtanding, as in the Practice. He that is truly Religious, walks as in the preſence of God,

and ſtudies perfection. The moſt acceptable Worſhip of God, is the imitation of him, which does, in a manner, unite us to God, and God to us; but it muſt be free then from wandrings, negligence and ſin. It is to no purpoſe to talk like Chriſtians, and live like Infidels. This was it that made a famous Heathen Philoſopher to ſay, that, There was *nothing more Glorious than a Chriſtian in his Diſcourſe; nothing more miſerable in his Actions.*

III. Repentance is that which brings us to a Deteſtation of ſin, with a full reſolution of Amendment, which reconciles us to God. To a Deteſtation, I ſay, of our paſt ſins, whereof the pleaſure likewiſe is paſt; but the Guilt, The Torment, and the Condemnation, ſticks by us. To conceal our Iniquities, is to no purpoſe; for, *A Guilty Conſcience paſſes Sentence upon it ſelf.* Conſcience is a kind of Tribunal which God Almighty hath ſet up in all reaſonable Souls, where every man is his own Accuſer, and both Witneſs and Judge againſt himſelf. Let us therefore enter into a ſtrict and daily Examination of our ſelves,

and without hiding, mincing, or ſlipping of any thing, call all our thoughts, words and deeds to a ſtrict account. He that ſays, *Lord be merciful to me a ſinner*, finds mercy. What am I the better for concealing my faults from other people, ſo long as I am conſcious of them to my ſelf? Unleſs I had rather be damned in private, than abſolv'd in publick: Whatever we do with our Bodies, there's no avoiding of our Conſciences; when we come once to caſt off that regard, we are moſt miſerable.

IV. Our Life is divided into what's paſt, preſent, and to come. The preſent is but a moment, and in the ſame inſtant, beginning and ending. The future has no Being, but only in proſpect; but whatſoeves is paſt, we can ſummon and call before us at pleaſure. Many people are afraid of their own memories, becauſe if they look back, their ſins flie in their faces. But this ſhould not be. Frequent Reflexion is the readieſt way to Reformation. The more we conſider our Tranſgreſſions, the more ſhall we abhor them, and the leſs will be our danger of a Relapſe. Nothing more or-

dinary, than for a man that has ſcap'd Ship-wrack in a Storm, to renounce the Sea upon it, and to bleſs God for the Mercy every time he thinks of the danger. It would be well, if we had the ſame ſenſe in the hazard of our Souls, which we have in that of our Bodies; and ſay, *It was a great ſcape: Let us take it for a warning, and run our ſelves no more upon the ſame Rock.* God hath ſpar'd us as often as we have offended; and ſhall we preſume then, and be the worſe for his infinite Goodneſs? We are many times plodding and forecaſting what we are to do for the future: And why can we not as well bethink our ſelves of what we have done already? For we muſt take counſel of the time paſt, if we intend to govern our ſelves as we ſhould, for the time to come. Many a man might have come to be wiſe in the end, if he had not thought himſelf ſo before his time. *In the way of Vertue, there is no ſtanding at a ſtay: He that does not daily advance, loſes ground.*

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIV.

Of Piety and Obſervance. The Commendation of Obedience and Gratitude. How to receive, and how to requite a Benefit.

I. IT is a point of Glory, beyond expreſſion, when a man ſhall be able to ſay, *I am the Son that never diſputed his Fathers Command; but whether it were eaſie or hard, ſubmitted to it with Chearfulneſs and Reverence: I am the man that never fail'd in his duty to his Country, to his Brethren and Relations; but made it the buſineſs of his Life to oblige and ſerve them.* Theſe we call Offices of Piety, where a mans Country, Parents and Kindred are in the concern. And what is Piety in this caſe, we call Obſervance and Reſpect in others; that is to ſay, in what relates to our Superiours, in Honour, Wiſdom, Age, Religion, Holineſs; as Princes, Prelates, Tutors, and the

the like, to whom we render all ſorts of Reverence; whether by Riſing, uncovering the Head, giving the Way, Alighting, Kneeling, Kiſſing the Hand or Robe, according to the uſage and cuſtom of the place. ...w the higher eſteem we have of them, the greater will be our Reverence; for it ſtrikes us in an aw, and keeps us at ſuch a diſtance, as manifeſts the ſenſe we have of the diſproportion betwixt us. *All Power is from God*; and what reſpect ſoever we render to our Superiours, it falls very much ſhort of what we owe them, if we conſider that we Reverence God in them.

II. As by the Diſobedience of our firſt Parents, Miſery came into the World; ſo by the Obedience of the Son of God, are we reduced into a capacity of Happineſs, if we will but be obedient our ſelves. Obedience is the perfection of all things, and the firmeſt Connexion of them with their Original; paſſing by a moſt admirable Circulation from God, unto God. Our Saviour gave it a preference, above all other Vertues, and parted with his own life to preſerve it.

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It is a kind of Immolation of the Will, which is ſaid to be better than Sacrifice. When my Superiour, or the Law commands me, I am not to reaſon the matter, and diſpute it, or deſire to be excuſed; but candidly, and without delay, to ſubmit, and to do what I am bidden, with an equal readineſs and alacrity, whether it be agreeable or unpleaſant; provided always, that there be no claſhing with the Will and Law of God; for in that caſe, we may be allow'd to be Refractory and Diſobedient; but in all others we are to ſubmit, without expoſtulation or murmur.

III. Gratitude is the ſenſe of a Debt, for a Benefit received. In the firſt place, we are to ſet an Eſtimate upon the Benefit which we are to value; partly, for the thing it ſelf; and in part, for the Kindneſs and Intention of the Benefactor. He that lies under an Obligation, ſhould be often thinking of it, that it may never out of his mind; for the man that forgets a Good-turn, will hardly requite it; and he that remembers it as he ought, has, in effect, requited it already. In the point of Gratitude,

Gratitude, there's no need of Money, Labour, Felicity; but the Will passes for the Deed, be the Benefit never so considerable. Let the Receiver behave himself Chearfully, and in such a manner, as that the Benefactor may read his satisfaction in his Countenance, and so reap some fruit of his bounty in the very act of conferring it. It is a great delight for a man to see his Friend happy, much more to make him so. The frank, kind and thankful entertainment of a Favour, is a good part of payment. Some people cannot endure to think of their debts, and those never had a mind (from the very beginning) to be Grateful; but he that extols a kindness, and wishes he could requite it, though he despair on't, has as good as requited it. I have seen some people look askew, and squeamishly (I know not how) when they have borrowed money, and take it in so odd a careless fashion, as if they would have it thought the greatest favour in the World for them to accept of it. He that is not sensible of an Obligation, does not deserve it; and a *cold Acknowledgement is worse than none at all.* It is the part

part of an honeſt man, in the very inſtant of receiving a Benefit, to bethink himſelf of a Return; for he's a Betrayer of his Truſt, that will not reſtore what he has received. Nor is it enough to give a man his own again; but Kindneſſes are to be repaid with Intereſt. There is a Gratitude even in the Earth it ſelf, that yields us our Grain again with intereſt. And yet we muſt not be too quick neither in our Returns: Some there are, that ſo ſoon as ever they receive one Preſent, will be ſure to ſend back another; as who ſhould ſay, *Now I'm out of your dirty debt:* But this is rather an Affront, than a Requital.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXV.

Of Truth, and the uſe of it. In Commendation of ſingleneſs of Heart. The Acts of Fidelity.

I. WHatſoever we ſpeak, write, or by any action hint, or geſture give to underſtand, let it be Truth; for nothing can be more ſcandalous than a falſe tongue in the mouth of a Chriſtian. It is a vulgar, and an unmanly ſin, to ſpeak one thing, and think another. He that is Generous, will deliver things ſimply as they are, without aggravating, amplifying, palliating, ſhifting or juggling. Plain Truth muſt have plain Words: She is Innocent, and accounts it no ſhame to be ſeen Naked: Whereas the Hypocrite, or Double-dealer, ſhelters and hides himſelf in Ambiguities and Reſerves. The Evil-ſpeaker hates the light, as well as the Evil-doer. We are not to ſhift our Opinions, as we do our Clothes, and to carry one appearance in private, another in publick; one thing in the face, and another in the heart. Nature

ture her ſelf has an Abhorrence for it, as we ſee in Children, even before they come to the full exerciſe of their Reaſon. The Lye is one of the firſt Reproaches they are ſenſible of, merely by the impulſe of an In-bred Averſion to Falſhood; wherein is remarkable the Providence of God, that has implanted thoſe Principles in our Souls, and made thoſe Vertues natural to us, which are of abſolute neceſſity for the ſupport of Humane Life and Society. It is an abominable thing to belie the Truth, even in words; but the Lie of Life is the moſt pernicious of all others. With what face then can we exclaim againſt the baſeneſs of a Lying Tongue, when our whole Practice and Converſation is but one continu'd Lie all through? It's a great matter for a man to conſiſt with himſelf.

II. Simplicity is a Vertue, ſcarce known among men, but of great worth and value in the Acceptation of God; who being Integrity and Simplicity in the Abſtract himſelf, requires likewiſe ſimplicity of heart, in thoſe that worſhip and ſerve him. By this Simplicity, is underſtood, an invariable Tenour of Life; which

which without any diſguiſe, or hypocriſie, is really what it ſeems to be. He that is endu'd with this Vertue, makes no ſcruple of frankly confeſſing his Imperfections, where there is occaſion. He deals candidly and clearly, without any fraudulent, or crafty deſign and intereſt in his proceeding: He believes all men honeſt, and ſuſpects no body. But ſtill under the guard of a prudential circumſpection, he makes it his ſtudy to be wiſe to God-ward, though the World calls him Fool for his pains; and the ſingle buſineſs of his life to pleaſe God. Why do we trouble our ſelves then about many things, when there is but one thing neceſſary? which is, that by an undivided affection, we may become acceptable in his ſight, who is Unity and Simplicity it ſelf. *There is but one way, to one and the ſame end.*

III. I look upon Fidelity as one of the greateſt and moſt valuable advantages of Mankind. Take away this, and you deſtroy Commerce, Friendſhip, Leagues, and even Government it ſelf. So neceſſary is this Vertue, and yet withall, ſo ſcarce, that it is hardly to be found upon

upon the face of the Earth. Witneſs our Voluminous Conveyances; the infinite cautionary Circumſtances of Witneſſes, Hands and Seals; the numberleſs Proviſions of Security, to make a Contract firm and binding, and all little enough yet, to prevent Subornation and Fraud: So ſordid are moſt people, that their Faith is not ſo dear to them as their profit. How ſhameful a Confeſſion is this of our Deceit and Wickedneſs, that we can neither truſt, nor be truſted without Witneſſes, and Securities! That we rather commit our ſelves to our Parchments, than to our Souls. But a man of Honour and Integrity will ſooner break his Heart than his Word; he will betray no mans ſecrets; he will not forfeit his Parole even to an Enemy; no, not if he had a thouſand Crowns and Lives at ſtake. He is not eaſie to promiſe any thing upon the ſudden, becauſe he knows that *haſty Promiſes are commonly followed with ſpeedy Repentance.* But when his Word is once paſt, he ſtands as firm as a Rock, unmoveable, unalterable; that is to ſay, *unleſs the Promiſe were unlawful, and in that caſe the Obligation ceaſes.*

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVI.

Of Friendſhip; the qualities and duties of it. Certain Precepts for Converſation.

I. THere is not any thing more neceſſary, more commodious, or more delightful in the courſe of Humane Life, than Friendſhip. It is the kindneſs of two Perſons grounded upon Vertue, and ſupported by a mutual Communication of all Comforts and Benefits. Now how great a Bleſſing this is, let any man judge, when two minds are ſo prepar'd and diſpoſed, that my Friends Breaſt is as my own; my ſecrets as ſafe there: And in caſe of my particular good, my own Soul is the leſs tender of the two. He is my Companion in Solitude, my Counſeller in Difficulties, my Relief in ſadneſs, and the joy of my eyes when ever I look upon him. He is my Confeſſor in all my Scruples; and I never meet with him (ſo much as by chance) but I'm the better for him. There are ſome little Creatures, that a man takes no notice of at the preſent, till he

he finds afterward, by a Tumour or Inflamation, that they have ſtung him; And ſo it is in the Converſation of a True Friend; we find the Bleſſing of it in the Effects, but when or how we received the Impreſſion, we know not. Friendſhip to be perfect, muſt be Reciprocal; but it is nobler to love, than to be belov'd; and therefore we are to conſider Benevolence as the foundation of it. The ſecondary part, of loving again, may have as much of Juſtice and Gratitude in it, as of Kindneſs. The moſt Illuſtrious Friendſhip of all, is that which is cimented by a Religious fear and love of God, without any regard to Intereſt, Paſſion, Perſonal Kindneſs, Flattery, or the like. *There can be no ſubſtantial and laſting Friendſhip between wicked men.*

II. In the choice of a Friend, we cannot be too wary. The Proverb bids us *eat a buſhel of Salt together, before we reſolve upon't.* But there are four Qualifications however, which are eſſentially neceſſary to the perfecting of a Friendſhip; that is to ſay, Faith, Intention, Prudence, and Patience. The firſt is a matter of great difficulty and hazard; for

for there is hardly that man upon Earth, whom we can ſafely entruſt with the privacies and concernments of our Lives and Fortunes; and then, if we be deceiv'd, we're loſt. In the ſecond place, the Intention muſt be pure; for otherwiſe, under the colour of a Celeſtial Friendſhip, there may be advanced ſome common and beaſtly deſign. There muſt be great Prudence too, for there occur many niceties in the enterchange of amicable offices and duties. The fourth Requiſite is Patience, or Conſtancy of Mind, which will enable a man to endure any thing, rather than forſake a Friend in his diſtreſs. If it ſhall be our good hap to meet with a perſon whom we judge to be thus qualified, we are not to reſt upon that opinion, without a further ſearch. But to enquire what Friends he has had before, and how he has us'd them, and expect that he will hereafter be the ſame to us, which he has been formerly to others. *A Faithful Friend is a Living Treaſure*; Ineſtimable while we have him, and never enough to be lamented when he's gone. There is not under the Canopy of Heaven ſo great a Bleſſing, as to be link'd in a Friendſhip

Friendſhip with a perſon that loves a man only for himſelf, without any reſpect to the Circumſtances of Fortune, Table, good Humour, or the like; that ſets us right in our miſtakes, encourages, relieves and ſupports us in all Extremities. There is nothing more ordinary, than to talk of a Friend; nothing more difficult, than to find one. There is not one man of a million, that loves *Gratis*; and he that loves for By-ends, cannot properly be ſaid to be a true Friend. His kindneſs is only govern'd by his profit. Take away the Cauſe of his Friendſhip, and that goes too. *True Friendſhip is there moſt wanting, where we imagine it does moſt abound.*

III. We are to treat a Friend that ſtands in need of Reproof, as a Phyſician does his Patient; he ſpares neither Fire nor Lance to cure him. We muſt behave our ſelves with Liberty, Boldneſs, Conſtancy, without neglecting or diſſembling any thing. *It is a damnable kind of reſpect, to pay a Reverence to Wickedneſs.* But ſtill, let the Admonition be private, and managed with all poſſible ſoftneſs, both of Language and Behaviour.

viour. Before the Friendſhip is contracted, we do well to pauſe upon it, and deliberate; but when the League is ſtruck, there muſt be nothing but freedom and confidence. *He that ſpeaks to his Friend, does but talk to himſelf.* The truth of it is, a man ſhould ſo live, as not to truſt even his own heart with what he might not ſafely commit to an Enemy. But ſeeing that there are many things, which Cuſtom and Decency have made Private, there is yet ſubject matter enough for the Truſt and Confidence of Friendſhip. Some people I have known ſo ſick of a ſecret, that they'd ſtill throw it up to the next man they meet; and publiſh in the Market-place, what was only fit for the ear of a particular Friend. Some again are ſo ſcrupulous on the othet ſide, that they'll ſmother all, rather than truſt the neareſt Friend they have in the World: (no not themſelves neither, if they could help it.) They are both in the wrong, as well for truſting every body, as no body; only, the one is the honeſter miſtake, and the other the ſafer. But the former is ſafe enough too, if we would but turn our care from the Concealment of

of what we have done, to the doing of nothing that we care who knows.

IV. There is ſome Affinity betwixt Friendſhip and Courteſie, or Affability, which is a great ſweetner of Converſation, and keeps it within the bounds of modeſty and few words. A good man has his ears open, and his mouth ſhut; and deſires rather to inform himſelf, than to publiſh himſelf; and to be a gainer by the Company, rather than to ſquander away of his own. We ſhould do well to acquaint our ſelves with the ways and humours of thoſe we converſe with, how irregular ſoever, and not to take notice of every trivial, childiſh Impertinence we meet with. It is a low and womaniſh weakneſs, only to frequent thoſe that ſay as we ſay, and blow us up with Flatteries and Applauſe. I would have a man to ſpeak ſparingly of himſelf, and his own affairs: not to be over-ſtiff in defending his own opinion; nor to talk too magiſterially in a ſtile of Authority. When we encounter any thing that diſpleaſes us, let us but try, before we condemn it in others, if we be not guilty of it our ſelves. By ſo doing, from whatſoever we ſee or hear, we may draw ſome

advantage: *And things are at a good paſs, when one man is the better for another mans faults.*

V. There are a ſort of men, that, if they do but ſee any thing out of the *mode* of the place where they live, will preſently ſtand gaping and laughing at it; and a man of the faſhion, paſſes for little better with them, than a Monſter. This is a moſt Inhumane Levity of mind, to adore our ſelves, and make a ſcorn of others. For we ſhould ſet an eſteem upon every thing, for what it is, and not for what it ſeems to be. It is the Novelty, the Artifice, the Rarity, the Difficulty, the Pomp, the Reputation, and the outward appearance, that enhances the price of every thing with the people: Whereas the Wiſe-man rates it according to the Intrinſick value, and reckons as nothing, all the reſt, which is ſo much the Wonder, and the Idol of the Brainſick Rabble. If we do not pinch and ſtreighten our ſelves, it is our own fault if we make not ſome profit of what-ever happens. Why do we not imitate the Comedians? They can Weep without Grieving; purchaſe, without Poſſeſſing;

Command, without Authority; Threaten, without Revenge; and Chide, without Indignation. The buſineſs is, they Act other mens lives without any concern of their own; and why we ſhould not order our ſelves in Society with the ſame Indifference, I know not: The whole World is but a great Theater, where there are as many Players as Men. Let it be our care, as much as in us lies, to be rather Spectators than Actors; for the latter take all the pains, and do but make ſport for the other.

CHAP. XXVII.

Of Liberality, what it is, and how to be exerciſed. Wherein it differs from Magnificence.

I. I Do not call that man Liberal, who does (as it were) pick a quarrel with his money, and knows not how either to part with it, or keep it. (For he does not give it, but throws it away.) He is the Liberal man that diſpoſes of it according to Diſcretion and Reaſon. He proportions his Bounty to his Ability: He beſtows it upon thoſe that want it, and picks his time too, when it may do them moſt good. Liberality is a Vertue that may be extended to the receiving, as well as to the conferring of bounties, bnt the latter is here intended; for it is more Honourable to Give, than to receive. It is not for any man to ſay, *If I had a Fortune, I would do ſo, or ſo*; for where there wants power and means, the very will is ſufficient. So ſufficient, that in truth, it is the main point of the Obligation; Which lies not ſo much in the profit

fit of the Receiver, as in the Intention of the Doner. Does any man thank the Sea for letting him ſail upon't? or his Orchard for a basket of Apples; or the Wind for a favourable gale? And yet theſe are all Benefits, but not conferr'd upon us by Voluntary Agents. Moreover when we are in the Bountiful Humour, the Quick-doing is the Grace: We muſt not ſay to a Friend, *Come again to morrow*; and ſo torment him with delay and expectation. He that gives heartily and kindly, gives ſpeedily. A Generous nature thinks he can never make haſte enough. *The Favour is twice as welcome, that meets the Receiver at half way.* A Courteſie comes ſo hard from ſome people, accompany'd with ſo much ſowreneſs, and inſolence, that a man had better be without it.

II. He that lives only to himſelf, without any regard to the Good and Utility of his Neighbour, can never be happy. What is there, that any man ſhall pretend to ſpare, as his own? *when all men of Eſtates, are in effect, but Truſtees for the Benefit of the needy.* The Bags that we keep under ſo many Bolts, and which

we have extorted from the Fatherleſs and Widow, by Violence and Blood: If we reckon upon them as ours, we are exceedingly miſtaken: For alas! They are but depoſited with us for the relief of others. Or however, 'tis but the rifling of our Coffers to night, and they change their Maſter to Morrow. If we would ſecure them, and make them our own, we muſt beſtow them. Nor is it ſo much a Bounty, as a Purchaſe, the parting with them. For *he that gives to the poor, lends to the Lord*; and (for the temporal advantages of Money, Land, Houſes, and the like) ſecures himſelf of a bleſſed Eternity in Exchange. Money is never of ſo much value in the Hord, as when it is communicated, and thrown among the poor.

III. Where the Expence is moderate, we call it Liberality; where it is high and ſplendid, Magnificence; which ariſe both of them from the ſame principle in the mind: But as to the World, the one ſhews it ſelf in ſmall things, and the other in great. A man may be Liberal out of a ſmall Fortune, but to be Magnificent, there muſt be Opulency, and Plenty;

Plenty; for Magnificence lies properly in the glory of the work. If a man ſhould ſell a Jewel, and give the product of it to Charitable uſes, this man is rather ſaid to be Liberal then Magnificent: But if he ſhould beſtow the value of that Jewel upon the building of a Church, a Chappel, or any other ſplendid and publick Structure, he is then ſaid to be Magnificent. Under this Head are comprehended all works of great expence, which relate to Divine Worſhip, common Utility, publick Exerciſes and Entertainments. In things of this quality, there muſt be a proportion kept betwixt the Charge and the Eſtate. For where a man Borrows to Build, and runs himſelf in Debt, for the Reputation of a great Name; ſuch a work is not to paſs for a Magnificence, but a Folly. He is the only Liberal and Magnificent perſon, who takes from himſelf, whatſoever he beſtows, or expends upon others.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Of Fortitude: The Duties of it. A man of Reſolution does contemn death.

1. SUch is the ſoftneſs, and the Infirmity of Humane Nature, that if it were not for this Virtue of Fortitude, we ſhould all of us moſt ſhamefully abandon our Stations, and never ſo much as dare to look Danger in the face. It is commonly divided into Active and Paſſive; the one emboldning us to encounter all difficulties, and the other enabling us to ſupport them. It is not the part of a man of true courage, raſhly to throw himſelf into unneceſſary hazzards, but generouſly to bear up againſt Misfortune when it comes. He does not pray for terrible encounters, but he laughs at them; when others are dejected, he holds up his head, and keeps his legs when others are at their length upon the ground. It is not Diſhonour, Repulſe, Exile, Oppreſſion; no, not Priſons, Tortures, nor even Death it ſelf that can ſtartle him: He has a greatneſs of

of mind, that ſets him above all Paſſions, Diſtempers and Calamities whatſoever. He is not to be wrought upon to do an ill thing, by all the fair and foul means imaginable; Let there be never ſo many Rubs in his way, he preſſes forward ſtill; acquits himſelf of duty, and goes thorow with his work, in deſpight of all Impediments. He ſtands upright under any burthen whatſoever, and ſcorns to go before, when Power, Terrour, and Violence ſhall have done their worſt upon him. His Vertue carries him through all dangers; and what he ſuffers by the way, he matters not, ſo he comes at laſt to his journeys end.

II. As men at Sea, in fair weather, are ſtill fitting and providing for a ſtorm; ſo ſhould we in Good Fortune, be ſtill providing and fortifying our ſelves againſt the injuries of Bad. And this is to be done by putting the caſe at worſt beforehand, and trying our ſelves upon the ſuppoſition, as if we were upon the real experiment. *My Children are all dead, The Veſſel's loſt, I am Baniſh'd, Wounded, Tormented, Diſeas'd, Calumniated, Diſgraced:* Well! and what does all this now amount

to, more than what I have foreſeen and contemned before? Our Joys and our Tears are alloted us from Eternity; and what variety ſoever there may appear in the Circumſtances and Accidents of our lives, all comes to this in the up-ſhot; ſuch as we are our ſelves, ſuch are the things we have received, Tranſitory and Mortal. Now what cauſe is here of diſpleaſure or complaint, if when we have loſt all that belongs to us, we are yet our ſelves, whole and entire? Life it ſelf is a Debt, and when God calls for it in, is it not better to make a voluntary payment, than to be forc'd to't? *Epicurus* is of opinion, that *a Wiſe man may be happy upon the Wrack*, and take pleaſure even in *Phalarus* his Bull. This is a bold word, and yet no more than we find verified in the conſtancy of divers of our Martyrs; who have dy'd at the Stake with ſo much chearfulneſs, as if they had felt nothing at all of the Torment. To him that truly loves God, all Pains are turned into Comforts.

III. The thing, which of all others, moſt ſtaggers our Reſolution, is Death; and I do not at all wonder at the difficulty

culty of bringing the mind to a contempt of *Life*, conſidering that (ſhort of Heaven) it is of all comforts incomparably the greateſt Bleſſing. And yet it is not either for a Wiſe man, or for a Chriſtian, to reckon Death in the number of Evils, which is, it ſelf, the end of Evils; and the beginning of Life everlaſting. Why ſhould any man be afraid to die, that is to live again? Or why ſhould he be afraid to dye, that is ſure to die? In matters that are doubtful, we may be allow'd our hopes and fears: But Certainties are only to be expected, and *none but Mad-men, will ſtruggle with invincible Neceſſity.* Children, and ſtark Fools, we ſee, have little or no apprehenſion of Death; and ſhall not our Reaſon then carry us as far as their Folly? Death is one Condition of Life; and he that has enter'd into the Obligation, muſt ſubmit to the Condition.

IV. Nature has been ſo kind, as to allow us the uſe and benefit of all her Creatures for a certain ſeaſon; when the time is out, let us contentedly depart; and according to the courſe of Providence, let one Generation make room for

for another. Where is the Wiſe man, that if it were offer'd him at the laſt gaſp, to live his life over again, and to run thorow all the fmother of his Mothers belly, the crudity and folly of his Infancy, the Terrours of his Childhood, the hazards of his Youth, the cares of his Riper ſtate, and the laborious irkſomeneſs of Old Age. Where is the Wiſeman, I ſay, that would accept of Life again upon theſe terms? Let us therefore conſider whither we are going, and what we leave behind us. If we were in deſpair of a better Life, we might then be pardoned the dread we have of the end of this. The truth of it is, we have miſpent our time in Vanity and Sin, without laying up any thing in this World, to give us a hopeful proſpect of the next: We ſhould not otherwiſe ſtand trembling upon the brink of Eternity; if it were not for Death, a good man had better never have been born.

V. No man entertains Death ſo chearfully, as he that has been a long time preparing himſelf for it; for frequent Meditation makes it familiar and eaſie to us, (I had almoſt ſaid, and welcome.)

It

It is not the number of days and years that makes a long Life, but a well-compoſed mind. A Soul that rejoyces to think of leaving the Body, and returning to him that gave it. *He that dies well, has liv'd long enough; and no man can fail of dying well, that has liv'd well.* He that would die in peace, muſt wean himſelf from all the ſatisfactions of this World before-hand. What has he to fear, that has already ſtript himſelf of more than Death could have taken from him? If we would make Life pleaſant, we muſt caſt off all care of that too, and then let Death come in any ſhape and welcome, whether we are diſpatch'd by a Sword, or a Fever, it is the ſame thing. No man is ſo happy both in Life and Death, as he that can every day ſay to himſelf, *I have liv'd*; for all that follows, is another Life to him in ſurpluſage. *He that would live comfortably, muſt dye daily.*

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIX.

Of Magnanimity. The Deſcription of a Magnanimous man.

I. MAgnanimity is an Heroical Vertue, of an indefatigable force, and undaunted courage, and never without ſome glorious deſign: There is ſomewhat extraordinary, methinks, in the very ſound of it. If it were not for this Vertue, moſt of the reſt would fall ſhort of their ends, for want of Reſolution to grapple with the difficulties they are to encounter. This is it that inſpires us with great and generous Inclinations, that animates and ſupports us in all hazards and Extremities, and, with God's aſſiſtance, breaks through all oppoſitions, till it has placed us in the poſſeſſion of what we deſire. He that would make himſelf conſiderable, muſt offer at ſomething that is ſo. *The more Danger, the more Honour. Man, when he is truly himſelf, can do more than we think for.*

II. Great

II. Great minds are always intent upon great matters: Not what the common people call great, for that they look upon as deſpicable. Their care is to do things that are Honourable in the ſight of their own Conſciences, but whether the World gives or refuſes them the Honour they deſerve, it matters not; unleſs in caſe where duty, or the glory of God requires the contrary. Their buſineſs is Vertue, not Oſtentation; and the reward of well-doing, they find in the Action it ſelf, without depending upon the voyce of the people. They are Eminent above others, and Invincible, and unalterably ſteady in all Fortunes; no Intruders into high places, but content in their own Stations. They are above ſubmiſſions and entreaties to other people, for they need nothing but what they find in themſelves. They know neither Fear nor Flattery; and when they put themſelves forward, to be taken notice of, it is not for Vanity ſake, but to juſtifie the cauſe of Religion and Vertue. And yet in all this height of Spirit, and Reſolution toward men, they are to Godward the humbleſt, the meekeſt of all Mortals. To him it is, that they aſcribe all,

all, from whom they have received all; acknowledging, that of themſelves, they have nothing, they can do nothing, they are nothing. Provided that a man thinks ſoberly and humbly of himſelf, he may be allowed to take ſome delight (with modeſty) in the good opinion of other people. It is not well to hunt or court Applauſe; but if it follows us, neither are we to reject it.

III. A great Mind preſſes to his end, thorow the thickeſt of his Enemies, and upon the very points of their Weapons, without any ſtop or heſitation. His behaviour toward his Equals or Inferiors, is Temperate and Modeſt. Toward his Superiors, it is neither ſlaviſh nor inſolent: He never paſſes the bounds of Decency and Reſpect; but on the other ſide he is not to be trampled upon. Where he Loves or Hates, he owns it publickly, and takes the ſame freedom in his Actions and Diſcourſes; for there is nothing in this World, that he either hopes for, or fears. He does many things that other people do, but not the ſame way, and therefore he's upon the Reſerve with the Multitude, for he takes no pleaſure at all in their acquaintance.

He

He does not willingly remember Injuries, and where they cannot be avoided, bears them, without any complaints or ſubmiſſions. There are not many that he commends, nor many that he would be commended by; but his care is nevertheleſs, to do things that are worthy of Commendation. No man has him at his beck, but his Friend, or his Superiour. He wonders at nothing, and the reaſon is, he meets not with any thing which appears to him, either Great or New. In caſe of Accidents, he is ſafe within himſelf, and ſo the event of things never troubles him. In his motion, ſpirit and ſtile, he is grave, ſlow, ſteady and compoſed. He that has but little to do, may do it at leiſure; and there is no place for much earneſtneſs, where a man is content within himſelf.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXX.

Of Patience; The Occasions and Effects of it. The Signs of it. An Exhortation to it, with Instruction how to behave our selves in Adversity. The necessity of Perseverance.

I. PAtience is a Vertue that enables us to bear Adversity with Equality of mind; but because there are several sorts of Adversities, there are likewise several Names given to Patience, answerable to the variety of evils which it is to be exercised upon. Patience, properly so called, is the gift of bearing Injuries, without perturbation, and with courage. When it relates to the loss of Goods and Fortune, it is call'd *Æquanimity:* And that which keeps up the heart, in the delays and disappointments of some expected Good, we call Longanimity. But the Vertue which fortifies us to all other purposes, and supports us in all Afflictions and Calamities, Foreign or Domestick, Publick or Private, is known by the name of Constancy; the

the Vertue of all others that we have moſt occaſion for. It is not for nothing that the Life of man is call'd a Warfare, conſidering how we are beſet with Adverſaries, and what troops of miſchiefs break in daily upon us. Not a moment paſſes without an Aſſault, without a Combat; and if we had no Enemies abroad, we ſhould yet find work enough to do with thoſe in our own boſoms. We breed, and we harbour Enemies within our ſelves, that crucifie and torment us. We come weeping into the World, and ſo we live in it, and ſo we leave it. It is the firſt thing we learn, and we can find tears, when we are capable of nothing elſe. We have heard of divers that never laugh'd, but not of any man yet that never wept. It concerns us therefore to arm our ſelves with Patience, without which, we can neither be reſolute nor perfect: No man knows the value of it, till he reads it; that is to ſay, till he falls into Tribulation. *Never was any wiſe man Impatient.*

II. He that never experimented *ill Fortune*, has the more to fear. Phyſicians tell us, that there may be too good a habit

bit of Body, and that nothing is more dangerous than a Plethory. So at Sea, a dead Calm is commonly the fore-runner of a Storm. If we lie under the laſh of croſs Accidents, we are not to reckon upon it as a Cruelty, or a Perſecution; but a Conteſt: Without a skirmiſh, there can be no victory; and without a victory, no triumph. Now if *Chriſt himſelf was to ſuffer, and ſo to enter into his Glory*; ſhall we pretend to go ſcot-free, and be made partakers of what another has purchas'd, *Gratis*? He that thinks to go to Heaven any other way, does moſt miſerably deceive himſelf. *To do good, and to ſuffer ill, is the Sacramental Oath of a Chriſtian.* To come now to the ſigns of a perfected Patience. He that has attain'd that point, bears whatſoever befals him, without reluctation; he does not murmur under the rod, nor return evil for evil. He loves his Enemies, and prays for thoſe that perſecute him: He ſees the hand of God in his Afflictions; and either ſays nothing at all, or appeals only to Heaven for relief, with a ſubmiſſion to ſuffer, whatſoever the Almighty ſhall ſee fit to lay upon him, with joy and thankſgiving. To conclude, *It is a high degree*

of

of Patience, to bear with the imperfections of a weak Brother.

III. In the loſs of worldly goods, it is no ſmal comfort, to conſider the frail, and uncertain condition of them. Whatſoever we poſſeſs, whatſoever we love, is Naturally Fugitive. It is with us indeed, but it is not properly ours: And we are not to fool our ſelves into a paſſion for an imaginary ſtability, we our ſelves are not firm to any thing, neither can we expect that any thing ſhould be ſo to us: Vertue only excepted, which Immortalizes, even our Mortality, all other things carry their death along with them. Let us therefore keep a diſtance betwixt our Poſſeſſions and our ſelves: For when they come to mingle and Incorporate, he that takes our Eſtate, takes heart and all. *A good man cannot be properly ſaid to loſe any thing*; for whatſoever can be taken from him, is no part of himſelf; but an Acceſſary or circumſtance, that, whether it ſtays or goes, he eſteems himſelf neither the richer, nor the poorer for. What a deal of pudder we make, what outcrys and lamentations, for the loſs of a ſum of Money,

Money, the death of a Child, the firing of a Houſe! but we can part with our Modeſty, our Honeſty, our Conſtancy, and never ſo much as change colour for't. And yet here we loſe a ſubſtantial good, and what's our own too; whereas in the other caſe we loſe neither: He that grieves for ſuch a loſs, deſerves no better. If it were not for an inordinate love, we ſhould not accompt that we had loſt any thing. What are outward things, to the inward man? or what correſpondence betwixt Wiſdom and Money?

IV. It would do very well, in whatſoever we go about, to take in all the Adjuncts that attend it, for there are many circumſtances, that for want of foreſight and precaution, may come to trouble us. *I call my ſervant*, it may be he's out of the way, or does not do as I would have him. *I'm to make a viſit*, who knows but the man may lock himſelf up? or ſhut the door againſt me, and refuſe to be ſeen? Suppoſe this before hand, and all's well. *It is the wambling of a Nauſeous mind (the Ladies diſeaſe) to ſtand pittering, becauſe (forſooth) I could not be admitted, as well as ſuch an*

one:

one: I could not get ſo much as one word with him: I was even crowded down to the lower end of the Table, &c. He that is not affected with this, takes no notice at all of it; and he that does not underſtand it to be mere matter of courſe, is a very great ſtranger certainly to the affairs of Humane life: If we can mend it, let us; if not, let us bear it. We are apt to exclaim againſt the Malice, the Wickedneſs, the Impudence of the Age we live in: And we do very well in it, if we can but reform the World, and drive before us all the Fools and Knaves out of it. But if this will not be, we had even as good ſay nothing: It is no new thing for people to go on in their own way: Why do we not rather turn the Blame upon our ſelves, for expecting any better? The world was never otherwiſe, nor ever will be; but faults there muſt be, as long as there are men.

V. He that labours under any Affliction, ſhould conſider, not ſo much what he ſuffers, as what he has done; and what he now takes for a ſeverity, will be then found to be a mercy: And that it is laid upon him, by Almighty God,

God, for his good; that is to ſay, that God chaſtiſes him to humble him; try him, harden him, and bring him to himſelf. They that take their fill of pleaſure in this World, are commonly reſerved for torments in the next. He that wallows in Abundance and Plenty, who knows how he would behave himſelf in a condition of Want and Penury? or with what conſtancy any man would abide the Rage and *Odium* of the people, that has grown old in the enjoyments of popular Honour and Applauſe? we are forward enough to offer Conſolation, and give good Counſel to others in diſtreſs: Why do we not rather apply to our own diſcontents, and turn the advice upon our ſelves? In the caſe of the Body, we can part with a limb to a Surgeon, and give him thanks too, and a reward for his pains: *Affliction is Gods remedy*, and no leſs neceſſary to the Soul, then burning or ſtarving is to the Body: And yet here we are apt to mutter and repine; and to miſtake that for a loſs, or a miſery, which both in the intention, and in the effect, is a cure. If Poverty, Sickneſs, aud whatſoever elſe we call evil, might but be ſuppoſed to enter into

to an Expoſtulation, and ſhould ask us, *Gentlemen, what's your quarrel to us? what hurt have we done you? have we taken away any of your Prudence, Juſtice, Fortitude, or any thing elſe that was good, and you could call your own? may you not live as merrily with us, as without us?* we muſt lay our fingers upon our mouths, and anſwer only in Silence. The matter duly weighed, we take good for evil, and evil for good: And *the greateſt of our misfortunes is our Impatience.*

VI. In another Bodies caſe, one may diſſemble a Reſolution and Conſtancy of mind, but hardly in our own. *We are to weep with thoſe that weep*; but though our Tears be in common, it does not follow, that the cauſe of them muſt be ſo too. We are as much as in us lies, to comfort and ſuccour the afflicted. If any man does us an injury, let us conſider, that, *Every thing has two handles; a right and a wrong*; and take it by the right. *The man is unjuſt.* If we take it that way, there follows Animoſity and Violence. But then on the other ſide, *he's one for whom Chriſt died; redeemed by the ſame precious Blood with our ſelves, and call'd*

out to the ſame glory. The turning of our thoughts this way, quiets all. We likewiſe paſs this reflection upon it; in the matter of repoof, we may ſooner hear the truth from an Enemy, than from a Friend; for it is his buſineſs to find faults, and to explore our infirmities, even more than we do our ſelves. If we do any thing that we ſhould not do, or neglect any thing that we ſhould do, we ſhall be ſure to hear of it from him, and to have the Town ring on't. Let us therefore make profit of his enmity, and look to our ſelves, we ſhall be the more circumſpect, when we know that we have a ſpy upon us.

VII. *Perſeverance is the Crown and Perfection of all Vertues. The reward is promiſed to beginners, but is delivered to thoſe that perſevere.* Wherefore, above all things, let us be firm to our ſelves; in the mounting of a ſteep Hill, if we come once to ſtop, we ſlip; and inſtead of ſtanding our ground, we ſlide down again. Let us reſolve what we are to do, and purſue it; for 'tis to no purpoſe at all, to do any thing by fits. It is a great weakneſs of mind, to be always upon

upon the ramble, and in queſt of new company, new exerciſes, new places; when the fault's in our ſelves, not in the Climate, or other circumſtances. The Plant that's often removed, withers; and the very change of Remedies, turns into a Diſeaſe. If the bleſſed Apoſtle found himſelf at a loſs, in the Contemplation of his duty; what will become of us then, whoſe Vertues are ſcarce comparable, even to his Imperfections? The love of Learning is never to be extinguiſhed. The love of Riches, never to be ſatisfied. The love of Honour, never to be allayed: So that there's no end of our greedineſs after things that are in themſelves, ſhort-liv'd and uncertain; but when we come to the divine and everlaſting Wiſdom, the leaſt touch and reliſh of it, cloys us. This is not according to his Precept, that ſays, *Be you perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.* He that looks up to that patern, ſhall never want place for the increaſe of his Vertue.

CHAP. XXXI.

Of Temperance; How much Modeſty contributes to it. Of Abſtinence and Chaſtity.

I. THe pleaſures that ariſe from the Taſte and Touch, are under the Government of Temperance; which only approves of thoſe that are neceſſary, and according to right Reaſon; and declares againſt all that's Artificial and Superfluous. The Infallible Rule ſhe proceeds by, is this: To take that for a meaſure in what concerns the Body, which Nature has made neceſſary; and never for pleaſures ſake, to admit of any pleaſure. This is it, that keeps a man from degenerating into a Beaſt: To this of Temperance, the Vertue of Modeſty does very much conduce. It is the Bridle of corrupt Motions, the Index of good Nature; the Guardian of purity; the witneſs of Innocence: Where Modeſty has taken poſſeſſion, there enters not ſo much as an unclean thought; much leſs an unlawful act. It teaches us

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to ſtand in aw of the preſence of God within us, and of our own Conſciences: And charms us with the Contemplation of thoſe Celeſtial Beauties, that illuſtrate all the works of Temperance. The man that is truly and perfectly Modeſt, will not endure ſo much as the name of Intemperance; his houſe ſerves him only for a Covering, not a Concealment; as it does to ſome others, who lock themſelves up, not that they may live more ſecurely, but ſin more privately. But alas! what does it avail us, to ſhun the eyes, and the ears of men; when God ſees us, and our Conſciences accuſe us?

II. The Vertues of moderating the uſe of meat and drink, we call Abſtinence, and Sobriety: But as to what concerns the Touch, we call it Chaſtity and Modeſty. In the uſe of Meats, it is no eaſie thing for a man to keep himſelf within the bounds of bare Neceſſity; for the Belly has no ears, hears no counſel, and will be ſtill craving and calling upon us for daily relief; but at how eaſie a rate we might diſcharge our ſelves of that importunity, not one man of a thouſand takes into his thought. In-

ſtead of gratifying the Neceſſities of Nature, we are on the other ſide putting a force upon her, to make her ſubſervient to us in our Luxury; by Irritating that Hunger and Thirſt with Artificial Provocatives; which ſhould rather have been laid, and pacifi'd, by Remedies Plain and Natural. The Vertue of Chaſtity is yet of greater difficulty among ſo many incentives to Luſt, without the ſingular Grace of God. We muſt keep our ſelves out of all Temptations; ſet a Guard upon our ſenſes, and preſerve a profound Reverence for our ſelves; for he that has no reſpect for himſelf, will hardly have it for any body elſe. Let us have a care of our eyes; for *many a man has been engag'd ere he was aware, to love in ſpight of his heart.* If it be Beauty, or Woman, that we love, there is nothing certainly in the World, that is ſo falſe and fading. Take her in all her Charms and Glories, and 'tis but the work of one ſingle moment, to turn all her Graces into Deformities; all her Sweetneſs into Corruption, and her very ſelf into worſe than nothing. We muſt flie ill Company too, and Idleneſs, and mortifie our Bodies by Faſtings and Diſcipline.

cipline. *In a very ill condition is the Soul of that man, that takes too much care of his Carkass.*

CHAP. XXXII.

Of Meekness and Clemency: The Excellency, and the Duties of both.

I. IT is the Offices and the Property of Meekness or Gentleness, to moderate the violence of Anger, and keep it within the limits of Humanity and Reason. Anger is as a Sword in the hand of Nature, for the terrour and punishment of Offenders. Now it is as great a Cruelty to spare all, as to spare none; for Impunity gives an encouragement to Villany. When matters are come to an Extremity, and that Justice is to be done upon a Malefactor, there is yet place for Meekness and Clemency; and we are to shew a kind of Unwillingness and Compassion, even where there is a *necessity* of Punishment. We are grievous sinners our selves, and as God hath dealt with us, so are we to behave our selves toward others; that is to say, with Ten-

derneſs and Forbearance, in hope of Amendment. God Almighty does not always proceed to Severity, but contents himſelf many times with our Repentance. It is a diſparagement to the Phyſician to deſpair of the Patient; for according to his kindneſs and skill, we are to judge of the facility of the Cure. Gentleneſs of Nature, to Anger, is like a Rock to the Sea, it breaks the fury of it. The Billows may rage and ſome, but the Rock ſtands firm, and they do but daſh and ſpend themſelves againſt it to no purpoſe. *Come unto me, and learn of me*; ſays our bleſſed Saviour. And what are we to learn? not to cure the Sick; cleanſe the Lepers; give ſight to the Blind; or raiſe the Dead. But, *learn of me*, ſays he, *for I am meek*. Such is the Excellency of Meekneſs, as if the whole duty of Chriſtianity were comprehended in that Leſſon.

II. As Meekneſs moderates Anger, ſo Clemency moderates Puniſhment. The one is competible to all men, the other belongs properly to Princes and Magiſtrates, in whoſe power it is to mitigate the ſeverity of Laws upon Offenders, and

and which they are to do without any reſpect to Fear, Profit, Friendſhip, or the like; but purely upon a principle of Generoſity and Good Nature. Clemency is not only the Priviledge, the Honour, and the Duty of a Prince, but it is likewiſe his Security; and better than all his Gariſons, Forts, and Guards, to preſerve himſelf and his Dominions in ſafety. When a Prince comes to be fear'd, he's hated; and when he comes once to be hated, the people wiſh him out of the World. His ſtrength lies not ſo much in his Arms and Magazines, as in the Hearts of his Subjects: For whoever contemns his own life, is Maſter of another mans. Many Executions are as great a Reproach to a Government, as many Funerals to a Phyſician. That Prince is truly Royal, who Maſters himſelf; looks upon all Injuries as below him, and Gvoerns by Equity and Reaſon, not by Paſſion. *The greateſt minds are ever the moſt Serene and Quiet.*

CHAP. XXXIII.

Of Modeſty, Studies, and Diverſiſements.

I. THere is not any thing, that does better become a well qualifi'd mind, than Modeſty. It is the Beauty of Honeſty, and the Check of Wickedneſs; and ſhews it ſelf in the very Habit and Geſture, without a word ſpeaking: 'Tis a ſtrange diſcovery that a man makes of himſelf, even in the ſmalleſt things; in a look, a ſmile, a caſt of the Eye, a particular manner of walking: But whatever the World may gather from theſe Circumſtances, let us be ſure that they may read Chriſtianity in our Lives. In all our Motions, Geſtures, Words, Countenances, there is a certain Gracefulneſs or Medium to be obſerved, betwixt Affectation and Effeminacy on the one ſide, and a Clowniſh Harſhneſs on the other. True Modeſty paſſes from the Mind, into the Body, and influences all our External Actions, with its Internal Gravity of Manners. A modeſt man is the lively image of God; his very looks compoſe

compoſe us: There is both Beauty in it, and Benefit. There is a Modeſty to be us'd in our very Clothes, Houſhold-ſtuff, Furnitute, number of Servants; which are all to be ſuited to our condition. Theſe may paſs for the Ornaments of our Bodies and Houſes, but they are the Impediments of our Minds; why do we glory then in Misfortune and Vanity, and in the multitude of our Diſtractions? A man has as many Enemies as Servants: They are ſo many Spies upon him; their buſineſs is to pry into our Actions, not to wait upon our Commands. They come humble into a Family; they grow inſolent in it, and moſt odious when they go out of it.

II. There are two ends of Studiouſneſs. The one is to attemper the Inordinate deſire of Knowledge; the other is, to quicken and excite us, to the learning of things profitable and neceſſary: We are all of us given to be ſearching and curious, by Nature; who knows well enough the Beauty and the Artifice of her own work, in the Structure of the Univerſe; and therefore has made us Spectators of it, that ſo much excellency

ency might not lie dead and fruitleſs in Solitude. But inſtead of improving this Goodneſs of Nature, we abuſe it; and ſpend thoſe faculties upon Impertinent and dangerous Curioſities, which were given us for nobler ends. Wiſdom does not conſiſt in knowing much, but in knowing things that we are the better for; and thoſe things in the firſt place, that concern our Salvation: Not that I am againſt Humane Learning neither; provided, that a good uſe be made of whatever we read toward the ordering of our Lives and Manners. In the reading of many Books, we are apt to take up a Rambling humour of skipping from one thing to another, and ſwallowing abundance; but we digeſt nothing. Whereas, we ſhould rather pitch upon ſome certain Anthors; take what's good out of them; read them over and over, and ſtudy them, if we would have any thing ſtick by us. Variety of reading, may be pleaſant; but it is the ſteady and certain Application of our Studies, that improves us.

III. And

III. And yet we are not to be ſo intent upon our Studies neither, as never to give our ſelves breath and reſpit. The Mind is to be ſometimes unbent; for there's no living without Intervals of Reſt. We ſee that in all places, there are days of Recreation ſet apart, by Authority, for the Refreſhment and Relief of the people. Now the mind may be ſeveral ways divertis'd, according to the diſpoſition of the perſon, and according to the occaſions. Some peoples thoughts and ſpirits are rais'd by nothing more than a pleaſant walk in the open Air; others again are for the delight of Rivers and Groves; ſome for a Country-Retreat, out of the duſt and tumult of the City; others, are for Hawking, Hunting, or the more harmleſs ſport perchance of Fiſhing. Nay, the very paſſing from one Study to another, as from Mathematicks, for the purpoſe, to a Conſort of Muſick, is a great Relief. Some are for Entertainments of Wit, as Comedies, or honeſt Games, as Cheſs, Tables, &c. But nothing better than a Chearful and Ingenious Converſation, that

that keeps it ſelf within the bounds of Honour and Modeſty: Some there are, of ſo ſowre and critical a temper; ſo Moroſe and Inſociable, that they'd ſooner be guilty of a Mortal ſin, than of a Jeſt. Others, on the contrary, are never out of Company; but perpetually upon the Droll, and playing the Buffoons. Now theſe extremes are ſtark naught, unleſs they be ſo qualified and temper'd, that the one may ſerve as a cure to the other. To be always in company, or always alone, is not well; but when we are weary of the one, we may have recourſe to the other. And ſo it is with Labour and Idleneſs; when we are weary of working, let's lye down and reſt; when we are ſick of doing nothing, let's up and work. Some there are, that have no Government over themſelves at all; but when they are upon the fit of ſtudying, day and night is too little for them, till they have read themſelves faint and blind: And ſoon as that humour is ſpent, they fall into the contrary extreme of Diſſolution and Lazineſs; and are as hard now to be reclaim from the one, as they were before, to be diverted

ed from the other. This comes to paſs, becauſe we proceed by leaps, and fly from one Contrary to the other; for want of ſetting to our ſelves certain Rules and Bounds, which we are not to tranſgreſs. Exceſs, or the over-doing of any thing, is enough to turn even good into evil.

CHAP. XXXIV.

Of Humility, wherein it conſiſts. The knowledge of our ſelves. The true Character of an Humble Man.

I. HUmility is a Vertue, that comes from Chriſt himſelf, who publiſhed it by his Doctrine, and taugh it by his Example. Next to Vertues Theological and Intellectual, it holds the firſt place; for it overthrows Pride, which is the fountain of all evil. It makes us acceptable to God, whoſe communication is with

with the humble: Without this foundation, our whole ſpiritual building falls to the ground. The name of it, 'tis true, does not ſeem to import any great matter; but it is the Vertue nevertheleſs, without which no man can be either great or perfect. It is that which puts us upon Illuſtrious Exploits, without danger of being puſt up; upon difficulties and hazards, without fear; nay, and without ſo much as a change of countenance or temper. Humility does not lye (as the people imagine) in the mere contempt and abjection of our ſelves; but alſo, in the juſt and moderate purſuit of Honour and Glory: Of Glory, not for Oſtentation, but for the Vertue it ſelf: of which, that Glory is the reward; *all other Glory is falſe and ſpurious*, and not worthy ſo much as of his thought, that knows the value of things, and perfectly underſtands himſelf. The Humble man knows too well, (to affect Honour in it) how little it is that he can contribute out of his own, to the works of Vertue: Beſide that, he is afraid of ſeeking, even the Honour that he deſerves, for fear of being inſenſibly

ſibly drawn in, to covet more than his due. There can be no leſs in *deſpiſing of Honour, ſince it is great Honour to refuſe it; and greater yet, to contemn it.*

II. The reaſon why we are not humble is, becauſe *We do not know our ſelves:* And we will ſooner believe a miſtake in our own breaſts, than if it came to us from the furtheſt quarters of the Earth. *What is man?* a weak and ſickly body; a pitiful, helpleſs Creature, expoſed to all the Injuries of Times and Fortunes; a maſs of Clay and Corruption, prone to all wickedneſs, and of ſo perverſe and deprav'd a judgment, as to prize Earth above Heaven; Temporal Pleaſures, before Eternal Felicities: *Every man living is altogether Vanity.* He is one of the moſt frail, one of the moſt furious, luſtful and timerous Creatures of the Creation: What have we then to be proud of; conſidering our miſery and ſhame, which we ſhould moſt certainly conſider, if we had but the leaſt ſpark of Reaſon in us. *We can never be perfectly humble, till we come to a perfect underſtanding of our ſelves.*

III. It

III. It is not enough for us to be humble, but we must be vile in our own eyes, distrustful of our selves, and ascribe all Glory and Honour to God. He that is humble, takes pleasure in the contempt of himself, and is only proud of not being affected with applause. He judges of himself, by what's his own, and he values others, by what they have received from God; so that he always lessens himself in the comparison. This is his practice, to set his own faults, against his Neighbours Vertues; by which Rule, the perfectest man alive, shall think worse of himself, than of another. He is obedient to his Superiours, not wedded to his own will: He confesses his infirmities; he bears all indignities with patience; he does any good office, be it never so mean; he is neither singular nor talkative. He loves privacy, without any desire to be taken notice of, he draws himself into a narrow compass; and he places himself both above the World, and below it. He is modest and circumspect, and speaks little, but when he needs must, and that too with a countenance,

nance, rather diſpoſed to ſadneſs than mirth: One may read the humility of his heart, in his outſide; his face is grave and modeſt; his eyes caſt down, like thoſe of a guilty perſon, before the great Tribunal: And betwixt the conſcience of his ſins, and the uncertainty of his pardon, not daring to lift them up to Heaven: He ſtands afar off, with the Publican in the Goſpel, crying, *Lord be merciful to me a ſinner.* To conclude, he trembles at the thought of himſelf; he deſpiſes the World, and all the glories of it; for *the whole Earth is as nothing, to him that does not firſt over-value himſelf.*

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXV.

Of the ſtate of the Perfect: The image of a perfect man. The end of a perfect life is union with God.

I. HE that wants nothing, may be properly ſaid to be perfect. And what can that man want, who is cleanſed and purged from his ſins, beautified with all divine Vertues, whoſe heart is ſet upon God, and his ſoul united to him to Eternity? This is the top of Chriſtian Perfection, and the laſt end of Chriſtianity it ſelf, to be nnited to him that is the End and Author of our Being. But it is not for man to attain this End, without the ſpecial aid and aſſiſtance of God; and therefore there are but few that arrive at this Perfection; for there are not many that entertain the Grace when 'tis offer'd them: But however, ſome there have been in all Ages.

II. We

II. We may pronounce that man perfect, whom we ſee unſhaken in dangers; untainted, with Luſts; chearful, in Adverſity; happy, under Reproach; quiet, in a Storm; Free, Equal, Conſtant, Reſolute, Generous, Empty of himſelf, and full of God: And ſo much above the things of this World, that the Hopes and Fears, which are the Anxity of other people, do but ſerve him for Divertiſement and Sport. His Conforts are out of the reach of Violence; and his very Misfortunes are for his good: He fears neither Diſappointments nor Accidents: He values things by the Nature of them, and not by Opinion: He ſees the World at his feet; he ſtudies, contemplates, and deſpiſes it, with an invincible tranquillity of ſpirit; and yet his Soul keeps ſtill her ſtation, where ſhe had her Original. It is with the Converſation of a Good man, as with the Beams of the Sun; which, though they ſtrike the Earth, are nevertheleſs at the ſame time in the great Luminary that ſends them; and ſo is the Soul of a perfect Chriſtian in Heaven, at the ſame time

time that we enjoy his Company here below. His mind is like the ſtate of the World above the Moon, ever ſerene and quiet. He knows neither Defects nor Variations; all Ages ſerve him. The Sun it ſelf does not look upon the World more impartially than he does, and without cumbering his thoughts about many things; he takes up his reſt in the ſimplicity and unity of God himſelf. He neither ſeeks nor wiſhes for any thing without himſelf; for he carries his happineſs in his own breaſt. It is to God alone that he dedicates both his actions and life. He that walks by this Rule, knows what it is to be perfect.

III. It is not for fleſh and blood to arrive at this pitch without his helping-hand, who ſays, *without me you are able to do nothing.* But there is likewiſe a neceſſity of precious Diſpoſitions. An intimate union with God, is the Accompliſhment of a perfect Life; and we muſt firſt caſt off the darkneſs of the Creature, ere we preſume to appear before him that dwells in an unacceſſible Light. How ſhall any man think to partake of

of the joys of Heaven, ſo long as he carries the corruptions of Earth and Fleſh about him? Every Pleaſure, every Vanity, every Vicious Affection, is a *Remora* to him: It ſtops him in his full courſe, endangers the whole Lading, and keeps him from his Port. *God is unity, and takes no joy in a Soul that is divided.*



FINIS.



Stephen Warte

his Book

1730